

Preached A. o. C. 1700

SERMON

Against the

ANTI-SCRIPTURISTS.

ALSO

Another concerning the

Sinfulness, Danger, and Remedies

OF

INFIDELITY.

Preached at

WHITE-HALL.

BY

SETH Lord Bishop of Sarum.

LONDON,

Printed by J. M. for James Collins, at the
Kings-Head in Westminster-Hall,
M DC LXX.

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2 Tim. 3. 16.

All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God.

IN the *verse* preceding, it is said concerning the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*, that they are *able* to make a man wise unto salvation, *στὰν μάθεις τῆς εἰργίας ἡμῶν* (by the *faith* which is in *Jesus Christ*) : And it *follows* immediately, *All Scripture, &c.*

H *asis* (the *Faith*) is often by a Metonymy taken for the *Gospel*, which is the *Object* of the *Faith* of Christians. We read often of the ^a*Preaching*, and ^b*Hearing* of *Faith*; ^a*Gal. 1. 23* ^b*3. 25.* of the ^c*Analogie* of *Faith*, ^d*the common* ^c*Rom. 12. 6.* ^d*Tit. 1. 4.* ^e*Jud. 3.* *Faith* ^e*which was once delivered to the saints* (in the *preaching* of *Christ*, and the *Writings* of his *Evangelists* and *Apostles*) and so I conceive it is to be taken in this place.

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So that the meaning of the whole is this, The *Old Testament* understood and expounded according to the *Analogy* of the *New*, is able to make a man wise. And the *Pen-men* of the *Canonical Books* of the *Old Testament* (wherein *Timothy* had been instructed ~~in the Epistles~~) and of the *Books* of the *New Testament* (which except those of *S. John* were extant before the writing of this Epistle) were *inspired* and *directed* by the *spirit* of *God*.

The words of the *Text* are an entire *Proposition*, asserting the *Divine Authority* of the *Canon of Scripture*; and my endeavour shall be at this time to prove the *truth* of that *Proposition*. Wherein, that I may proceed with all *plainness* and *clearness*, I shall premise two words by way of *Petition*,

{ *Precaution.*

1. *By way of Petition*, I suppose and take for granted;

1. The great *principle* of the power of *God*, and his *providence* in governing the world.

2. That *our Body of Canonical Books*

Books of the Old Testament, is the same with that which was in Use in the time of Christ and his Apostles, And our body of the New Testament the same which was ~~anciently received~~ in the Church. So that what shall be proved of those, is applicable to the Original Scripture used in our time.

3. That those Books of New Testament whose Authors were not *anciently questioned*, were Written by those Authors whose Name they bear. And that those few others which were *sometimes* questioned by some particular Churches, and afterward *Universally received*, contain in them no one point of Faith or Manners dissentient from the Contents of those Books which were never *questioned*.

2. By way of *Precaution* and *Admonition* I must intreat you to take notice, that I shall not now meddle with

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the Controversies concerning *Apocrypha, Translations, Keri and Chetib, Hebrew points, various Lections, dubious Authors or parts of Scripture.*

But my endeavour at this time shall be to *Assert the Divine Authority of the body and substance of the Original Books of the Canon of the Old and New Testament: And this not in the way of common place, but in a particular Examination or Refutation of the most dangerous Opinions of the Anti-scripturists*, which are these.

I. Of those who pretend to believe the *truth of the New Testament, and yet they deny the Divine Authority of the Old.*

II. Of those who pretend to believe the *truth, but deny the divine Authority of the New Testament.*

III. Of such as pretend to believe *matters of fact to have been truly related in the New Testament, but do not believe the truth of the Doctrinal parts relating to Faith and Manners.*

IV. Such as *deny the truth of the Relation of matters of Fact in the New*

New Testament, and in consequence reject the whole Body of Scripture. Of these as briefly and plainly as I can.

I. The first Opinion is of those, who pretending to believe the Truth of the New Testament, deny the Divine Authority of the Old Testament. The Severians, and the Manichees, Basilides, and Carpocrates of old: The *Catabaptists* of later times, some *Anabaptists*, *Antinomians*, and other Fanatical Sectaries amongst our selves.

In opposition to these, I shall shew, that supposing the truth of the New Testament, the Divine Authority of the Old Testament is to be acknowledged: Because the Divine Authority of the Old Testament is asserted by Christ and his *Evangelists* and *Apostles* in the New.

I. Next to the *Redemption* of the world, the great business which Christ had to do upon Earth, was to convince men that he was the *Messias*, and so to assert his *Legislative Authority*. And the great Argument which he used

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used for the conviction of the world
was this.

All the *Marks* and the entire *Char-
acter* of the Messiah, and of his *Acti-
ons* and *Passions*, were *prefigured* and
foretold by the *Law* and the *Prophets*,
and the *Psalms*, i. e. in the *Volume* of
the *Old Testament*.

And *all things* foretold or prefigured
concerning the Messiah, were
accomplished by *himself*.

So that though the *great Works* of
Christ, and the *purity* and *excellency*
of his *Doctrine*, and of his *Life* were
of themselves *sufficient to justifie* the
Introduction of his *Law* into the
World, yet he was pleased to resolve
(as it were) his own *Authority* into
the *Divine Authority* of the *Old Testa-
ment*, and to make use of those o-
ther manifestations of himself, in a co-
ordination with that principle.

And therefore we find him still
pressing the *Jews* with this, *that* if they
did *believe* the *Writings* of *Moses*, and
their other *Scriptures*, they must of
necessity *believe him* also.

Joh. 5. 46. *Moses* wrote of me (faith he)
where-

wherefore, did ye believe *Moses*, ye would believe *me*. The *Scriptures* *testifie* of me, therefore search them diligently, *ἐπειρύατε τὰς γένεσις*. For the *attaining* of *everlasting life* he refers the *Lawyer* to the *Law*, *What is written in the Law? how readest thou?* *For the avoiding* of the *place of torments*, he makes *Abraham* refer the *Relations of Dives to Moses* and the *Prophets*. Joh.5.39. Luk.10.26, Luk.16.29

In all his *Disputations* with the *Pharisees* and *Sadduces*, the *Lawyers* and the *Scribes*, he makes his *appeal* to the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*. And lest any one should think that in all this he did only argue *ad homines* (that disputing with the *Jews* he only proceeded upon their own *Hypothesis*) we find him in the course of his *Ministrations* *positively* Mar.14.49 asserting, that the *Scriptures* *must* be Joh.10.35 *fulfilled*; that they *cannot* be *broken*; that he *came not to destroy* the *Law* and the *Prophets*, but to *fullfil* Mat. 3.31. Mar.5.18. them; and that *Heaven* and *Earth* shall pass away, *before one jot or tittle* of these should *perish*, until all was

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was fulfilled. Thus he asserted the Authority of the Old Testament before his death.

And after his *Resurrection* he made a real demonstration that the Old Testament was given by inspiration of God; for *on the day* of his Resurrection, falling into company of two of his Disciples, going to *Em-*
Luk.24:27 *mams*: He began at *Moses* and all the *Prophets*, and expounded to them *in all the Scriptures* the things concerning himself.

And afterward when the Eleven were come together, as a *recapitulation of this* his *method*, and that he might instruct his Disciples in it, he said unto them, *These were the words*
44. *which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled*, which were written in the *Law of Moses*, and in the *Prophets*, and in the *Psalms* (*in the Volume of Old Testament*) concerning me. He opened their understandings, and said, *thus it is written, and thus it behoved*: And as a short Idea of what they were to do, he tells them,
 and

and ye are *Witnesses* of these things.

2. *In pursuance* of this method we find the *Evangelists* very *curious*, and very *frequent* in observing the accomplishment of the Prescriptions of the Old Testament, reciting sometimes the speeches of Christ, saying, that he did such, or such a thing, to the end that the *Scriptures* might be fulfilled: *I will not eat of the fruit of the Vine till all things be fulfilled.*

Sometimes in their *own Persons* observing the accomplishment of particulars, and noting either *particular portions* of *Scriptures* which were fulfilled, or the fulfilling of the *Scriptures cited at Large*, without any particular Quotation. Thus the *Evangelists* writing of the ^a*Concepti-*^b*Mat. 1.*^c*Nativity,*^d*Name of Christ,*^e*of*^d*Mat. 2. 15*
his coming out of Egypt,^e*dwelling at*^e*Mat. 2. 23*
Nazareth,^f*migration to Capernaum,*^f*4. 14.*
^g*riding to Jerusalem:* Say that these ^g*21. 4.*
things were done that the *Scriptures* (or the *saying* of the *Prophet*) at *Large* might be fulfilled: So likewise for the circumstances of his *Passion*,
the

[¶] Mat. 26. the ^b flight of his Disciples, ⁱ casting ^{56.} lots upon his Garments, ^k Vinegar gi-
ⁱ Joh. 19. 24 ven him to drink, ⁱ piercing his side, ^{19.}
[¶] Joh. 19. ^m bones remaining unbroken, &c. ^{29.}

ⁱ 37. Other times they note the particu-
[¶] ^{36.} lar Prophet, Christ ⁿ healed Diseases,
[¶] Mat. 8. 17 ^o spoke in Parables, and that the say-
[¶] ^{15.} ing of *Isaiah* the Prophet might be
[¶] Mat. 2. 17 fulfilled. ¶ When *Herod* slew the Children, then was fulfilled that which was spoken by *Jeremy* the Prophet, *Rachel weeping for her children*, &c. and once we find a quotation of the second Psalm, and the like: *This for the Evangelists.*

3. Lastly, the Divine Authority of the Old Testament is asserted by the *Apostles*: Whom we find every where in their Writings, *citing* the

[¶] Gal. 3. 10 Testimonies of the ^q Law and the ^r
[¶] Act. 7. 42. Prophets, and the ^s Psalms; appealing
[¶] Act. 1. 22. to them, ^t what faith the Scripture?
[¶] & 13. 33. ^u the Scripture hath concluded ^v or
[¶] Rom. 4. 3. ^x the Scripture hath concluded ^y or
[¶] Gal. 3. 22. ^z *so*: Arguing out of them, oft times
[¶] Act. 18. directly; thus not only the Apostles
[¶] 24. 28. but ^y *Apollos* mightily convinced the
[¶] Jam. 4. 5. Jews, sometimes *ab absurdo*, ^z do ye
think the Scripture speaks in vain?

In a word, the Apostles *followed* the way and *method* which their *Master* *taught* them ; they *asserted* that the *Gospel* was ^a *promised* by the *Prophets*, ^{Rom. 1.12} ^b *witnessed* by the *Law* and the *Prophets* : ^{b Rom. 3.21} ^c by all the *Prophets*. ^{c Act. 13.} ^d *Affirming* of themselves, that they *believed* ^{d 18. & 10.} ^e *all* things written in the *Law* and in ^{e Act. 24.} ^f the *Prophets* : and that they *continued* ^{f 14.} *testifying* and *saying* ^g *no other* ^{g Act. 26.} ^h things than the *Prophets* and *Moses* did ^{h 22.} *say* should come.

Finally, lest any place should be left for doubting concerning *any part* of the Old Testament, the *Apostles* have expressly asserted concerning the ^f *Law*, that it is holy, just, and good ; ^{f Rom. 7.1} ^g that the *Prophets* are holy, and ^h the ^{g Act. 3.21} *Scriptures* holy ; that they are the ^{h Tim. 3.15} ⁱ *Oracles* of God, ^k *lively Oracles* ; that ^{i Rom. 3.2} ^l God spake by the *Prophets* ; ^m that ^{l Act. 7.38} ⁿ *holy men* of God spake as they were ^{m 2 Pet. 1.} ^o moved by the *Holy Ghost*. ^{o 2 Pet. 1.} Lastly, (in the Text) that the ⁿ *ieq. yeq. uq. uq.*, ^{n 2 Tim 3.} wherein *Timothy* had been instituted ^{o 15.} by his Mother, were *given* by *inspiration* of God.

This is the sense of the New Testa-
ment

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ment concerning the *Old Testament*; supposing therefore the *Truth* of the *New Testament*, the *Divine Authority* of the *Old Testament* is to be acknowledged, contrary to the first Opinion of the Anti-scripturists.

II. The Second *Anti-scriptural Opinion* is of those who pretend to believe the *Truth*, but they *deny* or *doubt* the *Divine Authority* of the *New Testament*, either of the *whole body* of the *New Testament*, or at least of *that part which delivers the speeches and Writings of the Apostles*.

Of this sort there are said to be *many*, who by the power and influence of their *Education* are restrained from *denying* or *dis-believing* the *Truth* of the *New Testament*, and yet through the infelicity of *corrupt conversation* are fallen from that *Veneration* which is due to *writings* supposed to be of *Divine Authority*.

For the *History* of the *New Testament* they have the same respect which they have for *Tacitus* or *Salust*, or some such *other History*; for the *Mystery*

stacy of the Gospel, the same which they have for some parts of *Plato*, or remnants of *Pythagoras*. For the *practical parts*, the same which they have for some parts of *Cicero* or *Seneca*, or *Epicurus*. All which writings they believe to be *true*, but no man believes them to be *Divine*. And some there are who pretend a great *veneration* for the *speeches* of *Christ*, but have a *meaner esteem* for the *words*, and *writings* of the *Apostles*.

In *opposition* to these Opinions, I shall shew, that *supposing* the *words* of *Christ* and the *Apostles* to be *True*, it will follow, that they are to be *esteemed* to be of *Divine Authority*.

Because *Christ* and the *Apostles* did profess and declare, that what they delivered to the world, was of *Divine Authority*.

And because our *Lord Christ* did undertake not only for *himself*, but for the *Inspiration* of his *Apostles* also.

1. In the examination of the *next* Opinion, I shall be obliged to lay before you some of the *evidences* of *Divine Authority* in *Christ* and his

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Apostles, here it is sufficient to produce their *assertions* of it.

The time of our Lord Christ's *ministration* (betwixt three and four years) was spent in *preaching* and *working*, and his *Authority* was often *questioned*.

* Mat. 21. 23. In *Luke* 20. 1. and in the * parallel places, *While he was in the Temple* Mar. 11. 27 *teaching the People, and preaching the Gospel, the Chief Priests and the Scribes and the Elders came upon him, saying, tell us by what Authority thou dost these things (preaches to the people) and who gave thee that Authority?*

Knowing the perverseness of their minds, he was *not* pleased to *gratify* them at *that time* with a *direct* answer, but confounded them with a question concerning the *Baptism of John*.

But at *Other times*, upon *Other occasions*, we find the *Divine Authority* of his *teaching* abundantly declared and asserted by him.

* Joh. 14. 6. * I am the *way*, the *truth* and the *life*: * The words which I speak unto

yo

you they are spirit, and they are life. • *The words which I speak I* ^{Joh.14.} *speak not of my self, but of the Father* ^{10:} *which dwelleth in me.* ^d *As y* ^d *Joh.7.16* *Doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.* • *I do nothing of my self,* ^{Joh.8.28} *but as my Father hath taught me so I speak:* ^f *I have not spoken of my* ^f *Joh.12.* ^{49.} *self, but the Father that sent me, he gave me a Commandment what I should say, and what I should speak.* • *Whatsoever I speak therefore, even* ^e *Joh.12.* ^{50.} *as the Father said unto me, so I speak.* • *Heaven and Earth shall pass away,* ^h *Mat. 24.* ^{35.} *but my words shall not pass away.*

Thus did our Saviour assert the Divine Authority of his Words.

2. *And so likewise the Apostles are very frequent in asserting the Divine Authority of the things which they delivered.*

In the 15. of the Acts, we find them assembled about the question of Circumcision; and they accounted it no robbery to entitle their Decrees to the Holy Ghost, It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, v. 18.

Nor do they pretend to revelation

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when gathered in *Council only*, but each one severally for himself.

S. Peter professes of *himself*, that he
 1 Pet. 5. 1 was a *partaker* of the *glory* which was
 revealed: And of his *Gospel*, that it
 1 Pet. 1. 5. was *b* revealed from Heaven.

S. John declares that he had *conversac*
 with the *Father* and the *Son*; as for
 his other writings, that they con-
 tained the things *d* which he had
 heard and *seen* with his eyes, which
 he had looked on, and his hands had
 handled of the *Word of life*.

As for the Apocalypse, he professes,
 Apoc. 1. that being in the *Spirit* in the *Isle of
 9, 10: Patmos* he received it, and was com-
 manded to *write* it in a Book.

The greatest writer among the *Apo-*
stles was *S. Paul*, and the *greatest Question* hath always been (amongst *Un-*
believers) concerning his *Calling* and
the Authority of his *Gospel*.

He knew this very well, and there-
 fore we find him asserting both his
Calling and his *Gospel* with abundant
 care and diligence.

He affirms himself to have been
an

*an Apostle not of man, neither by Gal. 1. 1.
man, but by Jesus Christ, and God
the Father; That by God himself he Rom. 1. 1.
was separated to preach, constituted 2 Tim. 1. 11
a Preacher, an Apostle, and a Defen- Phil. 1. 17.
der of the Gospel. As concerning
his Gospel, he professes to have re- Eph. 3. 1.
ceived it by Revelation of God.*

*As for the spirit wherewith he
wrote and preached, he professes him-
self ready to give a proof of Christ 2 Cor. 13.
speaking in him. He appealed to the 3.
Prophetick Spirit then in the Church, 1 Cor. 14.
• If any man think himself a Prophet or 37.
Spiritual, let him acknowledge the
things which I write to be the Command-
ments of God.*

*Out of this assurance it was that
he enjoined his Epistles to be read in
the Churches of Coloss, 5 Laodicea, 6 Col. 4. 16.
7 Thessalonica, and 8 excommunicates 2 Thes.
such as should be disobedient in that 3. 14.
particular.*

*And lest any one should here re-
peat the Objection made against our
Saviour, Thou bearest witness of thy
self, thy witness is not true.*

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S. Paul speaking of *all the Apostles*,
 Eph 4.11 affirms that *God had a set them in the*
 3. 5. *Church, and that b the Mystery of the*
Gospel was revealed to the holy Apostles by the spirit.

Particularly, notwithstanding that
 dispute betwixt S. Peter and S. Paul
 * Porphy. (from the * first Ages of the Church
 Hier. Pro-
 em. Galat. to our own Times, objected by Un-
 C in c. 2. believers to the prejudice of Religion
 Celsus. it is remarkable, that, in the same
 * Gal. 2. place where S. Paul gives an account
 how c Peter was to be blamed, and
 how and wherefore he *withstood* him to
 his face at *Antioch*, he doth expressly
 affirm, that the *Gospel of the Circumci-*
sion was committed to *Peter*, and that
God wrought effectually in Peter to
the Apostleship of the Circumcision.

On the other side S. Peter, in that
 very place, where he may seem to
 Pet. 3. 15 complain of the ^d *Δυστόπεια* of S. Paul,
 yet even there he owns him as his
 beloved Brother, acknowledges his *Wis-*
dom to have been given him of *God*,
 and numbers *all his Epistles*, inter-
 ras λοιπὰς γραπὰς, amongst the other
 Scriptures.

3. Lastly,

3. Lastly, for such as would put a difference of degrees betwixt the Authority of the words of Christ, and the writings and sermons of the Apostles, they may take notice, that the Authority of these, resolves it self into the veracity of Christ himself.

He it was who being to leave the World, promised his Disciples again and again, that he would ^a send down ^b Joh. 15. upon them the Holy Spirit, that should ^b instruct them and teach them ^b 14. 26. all things, that should ^c Lead them into ^c 16. 13. all truth, ^d Bring to their remembrance ^d 14. 26. all things which he himself had spoken, that should ^e shew them things to ^e 16. 13. come, that with this Spirit they should not be lightly dash'd, or sprinkled, but that they should ^f be Baptized, and ^f Act. 1. 5. as it were plunged into it.

How all these Promises were performed, and how the Assertions of the Divine Authority of the Words of Christ, and the Apostles were proved to be true, I am next to shew. In the interim I conclude, that supposing the truth of the words of Christ and his Apostles, they are to be esteemed of Divine Authority.

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III. The third Opinion is of such *ble*
as pretend to believe matters of fact *Do*
to have been truly related in the New *Apo*
Testament, but they do not believe
the truth of the Doctrinal parts re- *cer*
lating to Faith or Manners.

Of these there have always been *too* great a number, not only *preten*
ders, who under a form of Christia
nity deny the power thereof, but ge
nerally all sorts of Hereticks. When *An*
Porphyrius had revolted from *Chri*
stianity to Platonism, and had bent
all his Forces against the *Scripture*
History, he was refuted not only by
Lactantius, and Methodius, men *Or*
thodox in Doctrine, but by *Eusebius*
and Apollinaris; and of late days,
Socinus and others have well asserted
the truth of the *Scripture-History*
who yet have been offended at the
dogmatical parts of the *Gospel, and*
concerning the *Faith have made* *ship*
wreck.

In Opposition to these I shall en
 deavour to demonstrate, that, *sup*
posing *Matters of Fact to be truly related*
in the New Testament, it is unreasona
ble

such *ble* to suspect the *truth* of *any* of the *fact Doctrines* delivered by *Christ* or his *New Apostles*.

evere Amongst the various fancies concerning *Religion*, wherewith the whole world hath been always embroiled: even *Two things* there are wherein all the Sons of *Adam* have agreed; namely, 1. *That* that is to be believed which hath received the *testimony* of *God*. And 2. *That* this *testimony* is to be gathered from instances of supernatural *Wisdom* and *Power*.

In the study of *natural* and Philosophical *Theologie*, the *speculativi* amongst the Greeks and Romans, and other Nations, sought after *Wisdom*, (*Reason*, and *Demonstration*. But) to reduce the People to the forms of *religious Rites* and *Sacrifices* prescribed them, they were made to believe the *Epiphanies* of the Gods, and the manifestations of their *Wisdom*, and *Power*, by *Oracles* and *Works supernatural*.

To these even *Mahomet* pretended though his great Argument was from the

the Sword : and of the Jews I need ~~know~~ never speak.

For a Foundation of Religion, and in our inquisition after that, short of this Testimony we ought not to stay : further we cannot go : And herein is the utmost of humane wisdom to consider well those Evidences upon which we adventure the interest of our eternality.

To this evidence therefore we appeal in asserting the Doctrine of our Lord Christ, and his Apostles ; Name mainly to the instances of Supernatural Knowledge and Supernatural Power whereby their Doctrine was attested.

I shall not here wave the force, but I shall decline the repetition of what I have formerly spoken concerning the attestations given to it by Visible Signs, Audible Voices, Apparitions of Angels, Fulfilling the Prophecies, Evidences of Christ's Resurrection, Mission of the Holy Ghost.

In Job. 7. 15. the Jews wondered at Christ that he knew any thing : How ~~knowest~~

knoweth this man *Letters*, seeing he never learned them? but if we *mark* the *Scriptures*, we shall find that he knew all things, and that nothing was withdrawn from the reach of his understanding.

He knew the sickness and death of ^{of} *Lazarus*, though absent and at a distance; ^{Joh. 11.} He saw *Nathaniel* under ^{the} *4. 17.*

Fig-tree, and convinced him that he was the Son of God, and the King of ^{of} *Israel*: ^{Joh. 4. 29} Come see a man (said the *Wor-*
man of Samaria) which told me all things that ever I did, is not this the *Christ*?

He was *Kagdiorwags*: The secret ^{of} *Joh. 6. 6.* ^{64.} *murmurs* at his hard sayings, the inward ^{64.} *desires* to ask him *Questions*; ^{16. 19.} the ^f *Reasonings* and *Dialogisms* of the ^f *Luk. 9. 47* *hearts* of his Disciples; ^g the secret ^g *Mat. 12.* ^{15, 25.} *Councils* of the Scribes and Pharisees, ^h their ^h *evil surmisings*, ⁱ their ⁱ *treacherous intentions* to intrap him, ^k their ^k *mental Blasphemy*, were all naked and manifest before him.

He knew what was in man, and ¹ *Joh. 2. 24* needed not that any one should tell ^{25.} him;

Mat. 17. him; **He knew** the various *Kinds* of **21. Devils**, and how they were to be ejected: *This Kind* cometh not out **Mat. 17. 21** but by Prayer and Fasting. **He knew** **Mat. 17. 27** the *Fishes* of the Sea, and where they were, and what was in them.

He knew not only things *past* and **Joh. 18. 4** *present*, but *to come*; **He foresaw all 11. 11.** *things* that were to come upon him, **13. 11.** *who it was* that should betray him, **Mat. 20.** he foretold his Disciples *all the circumstances* of his *Passion*, **18.** **Mat. 10.** **23.** *how he was to be Betrayed, Condemned, delivered to the Gentiles, mocked, scourged, spit on, kill'd and Crucified at Jerusalem.*

Behold, *faith he, I tell you before*; **Luk. 19. 44.** **h Let this saying sink into your hearts.** **Mat. 26.** *He forewarned Peter of his denial, 34. 31.* **k and the Disciples of their flight.**

l He foretold *things to come after Luk. 21. 20.* *his death, the time and manner of the destruction of Jerusalem: The success of his Gospel, the Effect (unlikely) of Joh. 12. his Crucifixion, m that it should draw 32. Mat. 24. 14. all men after him, n that it should be preached and believed in the whole world*

world spreading it self like *Leaven*, ^a Mat. 13.
 and like a *grain of Mustard-seed*, ^b 31.
 that *Satans Kingdom* should be ^b Luk. 10.
destroyed suddenly like lightning; notwithstanding ^b 18.
 the *false Christs* and ^c Mat. 24.
false Prophets which should arise. ^c 25.

These and many more were instances of the supernatural *knowledge* of Christ: And for his *power*, the time would fail me to insist upon the many and various instances mentioned in the Gospels.

I shall omit the exercise of his dominion over the Sun, Moon, and Stars, Plants, and Animals, Earth, and Water, the Wind and the Sea, and briefly mind you of those which concerned the bodies of men; how he 1. *Fed their hunger*, 2. *Healed their distempers*, 3. *Raised their dead*, and 4. *Cast out Devils*.

He fed ^a 4000 at one time, and ^b 15. 36. Mat. 15. 30.
 5000 at another, with 5 or 7 Loaves, 9. 27. 4. 23.
 and a few little Fishes.

He healed the ^c blind, ^d lame, ^e deaf, ^b Mat. 8. 14
^f dumb, ^g maimed, ^h feaverish, ⁱ hydro- ⁱ Mar. 14. 4
 pical, ^k paralitic, ^l leprons, and ^m luna- ^k Mat. 4. 13
 tick ^{12.} ^m Mat. 4. 23

Against the

• Luk. 22. tick persons. He cured not ^a gree com
 51. wounds only, but ancient inveterately
 • Mat. 9. 20 ^b Maladies of ^b 12, of ^c 38 years conti deli
 • Joh. 5. 5. nuance, one that was born blind. N

He used no *Plasters* nor *Potions*, neither
Telestmans or other *Charms*, but per cast
 • Multos. formed all these things by a ^d touc dali
 • Mat. 9. 20 of his *Hand* or of his ^e Garment. He cer
 • Mat. 8. 6. healed ^f absent persons as well as pre Gao
 • Joh. 5. 5. sent, & he spoke the word only and the by
 were healed. M

• Mar. 5. 41 He raised to life the Daughter of a tru
 • Luk. 7. 11 ^b Jayrus, the ⁱ Widows Son at Naim pow
 • Joh. 11. 39. his Friend ^k Lazarus, and ^l many bo the
 • Mat. 27. 52. dies of the Saints. Many of which to i
 • healed and raised persons lived till rec
 • Inf. Eccl. about Trajan's time, as *Quadratus* nat
 • H.l. 4. c. 3. 3. 37. Disciple of the Apostles affirmed i
 • Annot. p. 8. 1 his *Apology* to *Hadrian* the Empe
 rour. Sup Ch

Like a *strong man armed* he cast
 out Devils, whatever *kind* they
 were of he quickly dislodged them
 • Mat. 17. 18. that *foaming and tearing* Devi
 which withstood the power of his
Disciples, and *threw* down and *tore* the
 posseſſed person, even as he was yet
 coming

ee coming to Christ himself; he presently rebuked, and healed the child, and anti delivered him to his Father.

Neither their *long possession*, nor their *numbers* could secure them, he per cast ^a seven at once out of *Mary Mag-³ Mar. 16.9*
dalene, and an ^b whole *Legion* out of a ^b Luk. 8.27

H certain man of the *Country of the pre Gadarens*, who had been possessed he by them a *long time*.

Moreover, for *attestation* to the truth of his *Gospel*, he delegated all this power to others, to the ^c 12 *Apostles*, to ^c Mat. 16.7
the ^d 70 *Disciples*: ^c He bequeathed it ^d Luk. 9.3.
which to *Believers* at his *death*, and they also ^d Luk. 10.
til received and exercised this super- ^{1.---9.}
natural power. ^c Mat. 16. ^{17.}

I have given a few instances of the Supernatural *Wisdom* and *Power* of Christ *solitarily* considered: The History of the *Gospel* affords us many Examples wherein they were gloriously combined.

By his *Knowledge*^f he foretold his ^f Mat. 16.
Resurrection, he ^g performed it by his ^{21.} Mat. 28.2.
Power. By his *Divine Understand-^h Joh. 16.*
ing he ^h foresaw his *Ascension*, and by ^{16, 28.}
the

Luk.24. the *Power* of his *Divinity* he ^{hit}
57. ascended.

He ascended, and by his *Power* he ^{dia}
fulfilled the *Predictions* and *Promises* ^{cei}

Act. 2.4. which he had made. *He* ^h*sent* down ^{the}
the *Holy Spirit*, and *shed forth the gift* ^{of}
of supernatural Wisdom and Power ^{Re}
upon his Apostles. ^{sho}

Not to mention the Apparition ⁱⁿ *of* ^l

Act. 9. Angels, and of Christ himself, the ^{He}

10. *Bath. Kol.* the ^c*Extasies*, ^d*Dreams* ^{ter}

22.17. *Visions*, and ^e*Impulses* which were th

Act. 16.9 given them for their *own* ^{com} *assurance*

That they might be enabled to preach ^{day}

the *Gospel* to all *Nations*, and deliver ^{bre}

to the world those *Scriptures* whereo ^{om}

we are speaking, they had ^f*the word* ⁱⁿ *of* ^{ind}

Cor.12.9 *of Knowledge* and *of Wisdom* and ^E

of Faith, and the *gift* of diverse ^{com} *Tongues*, ^{pow}

and *interpretation* ^{orais} *Tongues* ^{ose} bestowed upon them.

And to *justify* their *Doctrine* ^{vera}

the *Ages present and to come*, they ^{ind}

had the *Gifts of Prophecie*, and ^{ent}

Healing, and of *Miracles*. ^{the}

Ap. 4.1. ⁱ*John* (*the beloved Disciple*) heard ^{un}
a *voice* as it were of a *Trumpet*, talk-^{tan}
ing with him, which said, *Come up* ^{up}
hither.

hither, and I will shew thee *things*
which shall be hereafter; and imme-
diately he was in the *spirit*, and re-
ceived the *Revelation*.

^{own} ^a *Paul an Apostle* (though born out ^{Act. 27.}
of due time) came to *Visions and* ^{10, 22.}
Revelations, he *twice foretold* what

should *happen to the ship* where-
in he was carried *Prisoner to Rome*.

He foretold the ^b *Apostacy of the lat-* ^{2 Thes. 2.}
amister times, the *rising of Antichrist*,
were the *perillous times* which should ^c *2 Tim. 3. 1*
come upon the world in the last
days. ^d *Agabus a Believer at large* ^{Act. 11. 8.}
foretold the *Famine* which was to ^e *21. 10.*
come upon all the world, ^f and the ^g *Act. 5. 13.*
word *binding of Paul at Jerusalem, &c.*

But the *Instances of supernatural*
power *exercised in healing of Diseases,*

Raising the dead, & confounding the Op-
posers of their Doctrine, and in se-
veral other kinds by the Apostles,
they and their Companions and Adhe-
rents, the Preachers and Writers of
the Doctrine of the Gospel, are so a-
undantly delivered in the New Te-
talk-tament, that I shall not offer at parti-
ulars.

Against the

In the 4. of the Acts we find all the Apostles praying &c, that God would stretch forth his hand to heal, & that signs and wonders might be done by the Name of his holy child Jesus. And immediately the place was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and with Power.

The particular *Miracles* of particular persons are recorded. In one word, they went and preached everywhere the Doctrines which are written in the *Gospel*; the Lord working with them, and confirming their words by mighty signs and wonders, and gifts of the *Holy Ghost*.

This is the state of the matter of Fact, as it is propounded in the New Testament: I conclude therefore, that supposing matters of Fact to be true, delivered in the New Testament, there is no reason to doubt of the Doctrines delivered by Christ or his apostles, relating to faith or manners. And I come to the consideration of the last and extreme Opinion of the Anti-scripturists.

IV. The last Opinion, is of those who deny the truth of the Relation of matters of Fact delivered in the New Testament, and in consequence reject the whole body of the Scriptures.

I could wish there were no such as these, and that what I have yet to say were altogether needless for that reason.

But what means then the publick Rumors which we hear ? and whence is an Opinion gone into the world, that some great Philosophers and men of generous reason are dissatisfied concerning the truth of Scripture, and believe the Authority of it to be wholly derived from the Magistrate.

In reference to these I shall endeavour,

1. Briefly, to shew that the ground upon which these Wisemen and Philosophers reject the Scriptures, is contrary to the Reason of mankind.

2. To evince, that the belief of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures is most agreeable to Reason.

Against the

1. *As for the Argument and ground of those (amongst us Christians) that reject the body of the Scriptures, I do not remember to have heard of other than this.*

They have often called upon Believers, Pastors perhaps, or Doctors in the Church, for a clear and undeniable evidence of the truth of the story of the Gospel, and they have not afforded it: therefore they conclude, the Scriptures are to be rejected.

But is this the reasoning of generous Wits? and men of mighty deeds in Disputation, of men pretending to the depths of Reason and Philosophy?

To give a man a clear and undeniable evidence of any thing, there are but two ways, viz. To convince either his *senses* or his *Understanding*; the former whereof is to be done by *Experiment*, the later by *Demonstration*.

Would they have now an Experiment whether such or such a thing were done 16 or 1700 years ago? Would they have a demonstration of parti-

particulars, in their nature *indifferent* to be done or not to be done, depending upon the *liberty* of Causes?

Well were it for the world, if these *Beaux Esprits* would have the *patience*, and endure the *fatigue* of acquainting themselves with the *ways of knowledge* (*Experiment and Demonstration*) it would not then be troubled with the dangerous *Impertinency* of such *Pretenders*.

Then these men would not call for *Experiment* in a subject *uncapable* of it, and (being instructed that *Demonstration* is only of *Universal Propositions* in *materia necessaria*, whose *contrary Positions imply a contradiction*) they would *know*, that to demand *this kind of evidence* of the truth of the *story* of the *Gospel*, is to be absurdly *injudicious*, and to *act* contrary to the *Reason* of mankind.

For seeing we may not with *civility* suppose this *principle* to be advanced only for the *destruction* of *Religion*, and the *ruine* (or at least *undeniable hazard*) of the

Souls of men; *We ought to believe* that these *Philosophers* intend this as a general *Maxim*; *“that (in matters* *at least of moment) men ought not to* *adventure to act, but upon clear and* *undeniable evidence, and (speaking* *properly) that wise men ought to be* *lieve nothing at all.* Wherefore let *us suppose this for a general principle,* and consider what will follow.

Setting aside the knowledge of the *Affections* *of a few Lines and Numbers,* *is not all learning to be cast away?* *Must not the Civil World of mankind* *be brought to swift confusion?* *must* *not mankind it self, in a few days* *come to an end?*

suppose a subject should not yield *his Obedience, or a Tenant his Rent,* *till Titles be made out by Experiment* *or Demonstration. suppose the Hus*
Arist. polit.
1.7.c.8. *band-man and the Merchant, the Ar*
tificer, the Souldier, the Banker, and *the Judge should not adventure, but* *stay for the assurance of Experiment* *or Demonstration, would not the whole* *world be confounded?*

Suppose

suppose men should not marry, nor take Physick, nor eat or drink till they should have clear and undeniable evidence, that all these things are what they suppose, and shall succeed according to expectation, would not mankind quickly be spent, and brought to an end?

If the management of all humane concerns, *Political, Oeconomical, Personal*, proceed upon the grounds of *Belief and Hope*, and rational (but not demonstrative) inference. If neither these Philosophers (if they would consider) nor any other Person, either ever did, or possibly could, perform any one action, upon such evidence, as these men require concerning the truth of the stories of the *Scripture*; then to reject them for want of such evidence, is repugnant to the Reason of mankind.

I proceed therefore to my second assertion, that the *Belief of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures* is most agreeable to reason.

That the *Divine Authority of all the*
C 4 *Scriptures*

Scriptures of the *old* and *New Te- In*
stament, are *undeniably concluded* in the
 from supposition of the *truth* of the *advan-*
Relation or History of matters of *fact* *Test-*
 in the *New Testament*, I have alrea- *1.*
 dy shewn. And that the *rejection* of *Cog-*
 all *History* is *against* the *Reason* of *1.*
 mankind is evident, because all man- *natu-*
 kind receive some *History* or other: *sible,*
 wherefore I shall briefly shew, *his*
1. That the *History* of the *New*
Testament hath *all* those *advantages*
 whereof *any History* is *capable*.

2. That it hath *greater* *advantages*
 than any other *History*.

1. The Arguments inducing men to
 the belief of any historical *Relation*,
 are all of them

Either { *Ab intra, Internal*, from the *1. Cre-*
ability and *Sciability* of the *Ob-*
ject. *2.* The *Knowledge* and *In-*
tegrity of the *Writers*. *3.* The
way and *manner* of *writing*.

Ab extra, External, The *1. Re-*
ception of it in the *world*. *2. Con-*
current *testimonies* of *strangers*.
3. The *Concessions* of *Adversa-*
ries, and the *like*.

In

In all which *particulars*, no *History* in the world can justly pretend any advantage above that of the New Testament.

1. For the Credibility, Object, and Cognoscibility of it.

1. To say that instances of *super-natural Power* and *Wisdom* are impossible, is to deny the *power of God* and his *providence* in governing the world: And to say that such things are *incredible*, as are and *have been* actually *believed*, in *all times*, and by *all sorts of persons*, *Jews and Gentiles*, *Christians and Mahometans* (a few *Atheistical persons only excepted*) is an *absurdity*.

The *History* that we speak of, *pretends to no Intrigues or Cabalistick Counsels, or Mysteries of State*, but *contains it self within the limits of things Visible and Audible, things that were done or spoken*; so that *no History* can have *advantage over it, respecting Object*.

2. As for *Knowledge* in the *deli-verers*, I shall shew it by a *brief Induction*.

The

Against the

The whole New Testament consists of the Books of the *Revelation*, *Epistles*, *Acts of the Apostles*, and the *Gospels*.

The *Authors* of the *Epistles* and the *Revelation*, in the *Narrative* part of them, deliver the things *done* or *spoken to or by themselves*, and could not be *ignorant* of their own *experiences*.

The *Book* of the *Acts* contains some things *done by or to the rest of the Apostles*, but chiefly the *concernments of Paul*; and it was written by *Luke*, who was an *individual Companion of Paul*, and *intimately conversant with the rest of the Apostles*.

For the things *Related* in the *Gospel* of *S. Luke*, he saith they were *delivered to him by those who from the beginning were Eye-witnesses of the works, and Ministers of the Word*, and his *History agrees with the other Evangelists*.

The *Gospel* of *S. Mark* hath nothing which is not in *S. Matthew* or *S. John*, and was *dictated by S. Peter, the Head of the Apostles*.

S. Matthew was an *Apostle*, and *S. John*

John the Bosom Apostle of Christ. The Apostles were chosen by him for Witnesses of his Words and Actions, they were with him from the beginning of his Ministry, continued with him till his death, conversed with him till his Ascension; That which they had heard, which they had seen with their Eyes, which they had looked on, which their hands had handled of the word of life, that they delivered in writing to the World: And more than this no Writer or Relater of History can pretend to.

2. For Arguments of their sincerity, they have left ^a Precepts of Veracity, and ^b prohibitions of lying, under pain of Hell torments, the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone: They have ^c protested that they did not follow cunningly devised Fables; that they did things sincerely as in the sight of God.

They have appealed to the searcher of hearts: The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ knoweth that I lie not. The things which I write unto you, behold, before God I lie not, Gal. 1. 20. faith S. Paul.

They

^a Cor. 5. 8.

6. 4. 8.

Phil. 4. 8.

^b Jam 3. 14

Eph. 4. 25.

Apoc. 21.

8. 27.

^c 22. 15.

^c 2 Pet. 1. 16

^c 2 Cor. 2. 17

Against the

^{1 Thes. 2.3.} They have left behind them various instances of their simplicity and godly sincerity in representing their failings to the world, and of candour and ingenuity in distinguishing the dictates of their own Reason from the inspirations of the Holy Spirit: I speak by permission, not by commandment of the Lord: *This say I, not the Lord* ^{it is} *Thus it is according to my judgment* ^{on} *Cor. 7.* ^{bon}

But besides all this, let the matter be estimated according to common reason: If these men did devise a Fable and impose it upon the world, what end could they propound to themselves in so doing? was there any profit in being destitute of all things? or pleasure in being persecuted, afflicted, and tormented? or honour in being counted Fools and Madmen.

Before they began to publish the stories whereof we speak, their Master was gone, and all worldly hopes were gone away with him: If they were not bound in Conscience, and in spirit,

rit; what obligation had he laid upon them to labour and suffer for his honour as they did?

To omit the severity of his behaviour to them, He called them off from their *Vocations*, *Peter*, and *Andrew*, *James*, and *John* from their *Fishing*, *Matthew* from his *Customers* place, the ^{Mat. 9.9.} rest accordingly.

They *forsook* their *Nets*, their ^{Mat. 4.20.} **ships*, their *Relations*, and all their ^{22.} *interests*, and followed him.

And this they did (*clearly* and *plainly*) believing that he was to be a *Great Temporal Prince*, and in hopes of *Preferment* under him. In this *Expectation* they continued to the last minute of his conversation with them upon Earth, and he permitted them so to do.

Their last words to him were delivered in this question, *Lord wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom unto Israel?* Of the *thing* it self they *never doubted*, they *only* desire to be *informed* of the *time*,

Now after so long expectation?
Consider his Answer. His

Against the

His Answer was this, *It is not for denti
you to know the times, &c. but ye shall parts
receive power when the Holy Ghost is cirec
come upon you, and ye shall be witnes person
ses of me unto the utmost parts of the Exan
earth; and immediately he vanished cont
away.*

*Was this an answer to their Question?
or a satisfaction to their expe
ctation? Was this an Obligation laid
upon them? If he had not sent down
the Holy Ghost, this would have
moved them indeed, but it would
have been to rage and indignation;
this would have obliged them indeed,
but it would have been to detest and
abhor the name and memory of him
that had abused them. But for the
honour of his name, not their own, they
did and suffered all things, and glo
ried in it. An irrefragable argument
of their sincerity in the things which
they delivered.*

3. Of the internal Arguments for the
belief of History, there remains only
the Consideration of the way and man
ner of writing.

*Histories then carry their own cre
dentials*

for *dentials* in them, when the *principal* parts of them are *delivered* with such *circumstances of times, places, and persons*, as may render them liable to *Examination, and Refutation*, if they contain any *falsehood* in them.

And in this particular, no *History* hath any *advantage* over that *History* whereof we are *speaking*, as will be evident to him that considers it thoroughout.

Concerning *John the Baptist*, it is recorded, that he was born some few ^{Luk.1.5.} Months before *Christ*, that his *Mother* was *Elizabeth*, that his *Father* was *Zachariah*, a *Priest* of the *Course of Abia*, that they *lived* in the *Hill-Country*.

He began to preach in the 15. of *Tyberius*, *Pilat* being *Governour of Iudea*, *Herod Tetrarch of Galilee*, ^{Luk.3.1.} his Brother *Philip Tetrarch of Iturea*, and of the Region of *Trachonitis*, and *Lysanias Tetrarch of Abilene*. Punctual and particular.

Soon after this he was *Imprisoned* and *Beheaded* by *Herod*, for *reprobating* him about *Herodias*, all which ^{Mat. 14.3.} <sup>Vide 70-
seph. Ant.</sup> were matters of *Fact*, very easie, if ^{18.c.9.10.} ^{Luk.2.1.} false,

false, to have been refuted.

Concerning Christ, his birth is stated to have been at a time the most remarkable that ever was, when the whole world was taxed by Augustus, in the days of Herod, when Cyrenius was Governour of Syria; the place easie to be enquired of, it was in a Manger, in an Inne, in a Town that was a little one among the thousands of Judæa, easie to be examined.

Mat. 4. 6.

Mic. 5. 2.

When he was about 30 years old, he was Baptized of John, & within a few days after he called his Apostles; and in less than four years space he performed all his mighty Works, whereof I shall mention only some few particulars.

Joh. 2. 1.

11.

Mat. 9. 18.

Mar. 8. 6.

Luk. 7. 4.

Joh. 11. 13.

At Cana in Galilee he turned Water into Wine, at a Wedding, where was much company. He raised the Daughter of Jairus, the Ruler of the synagogue, there was but one in that place, she was his only Daughter, and about 12 years Old. He healed the Servant of that Centurion that had built a synagogue. Can any thing be more particular?

At Bethany, 15 Furlongs from Jerusalem,

rusalem, a few days before his death, he raised *Lazarus* after he had been dead four days. Could any thing be more examinable?

His death was at *Jerusalem*, at the time of the *Passeover*, a time of greatest annual concourse in the world, and then it is said, that the sun was darkened, the *Veil* rent, the *Rocks* torn a-pieces, the *Graves* opened. Can any thing be more refutable than these things, if they had been false?

So likewise for the *Apostles*. The healing of *Æneas* at *Lydda*, raising of *Dorcas* at *Joppe*, the passages with *Cornelius* Captain of the Band called the *Italian Band* at *Cæsarea*, and many other acts of *Peter*. The increpation of *Barjesus* at *Paphos*, in the presence of *Sergius Paulus* the *Governour*. The healing of a *Cripple* at *Lystra*, in the presence of the *Priest* of *Jupiter*, besides many other acts of *Paul*, and the rest of the *Apostles*, are so circumstantiated in the *History*, that if false they might have been very easily contradicted.

D

But

Act 9. 33.
40.
10. 1.13. 6.
14. 13.

Against the

But besides all these, this History contains a *Narration of things done and said*, not only by persons well affected, but by *Herod and Pontius Pilate*, and the *Roman Governours*, by the *Pharisees*, the *Scribes*, the *High Priests*, and the *Sanhedrim*; all of them *Enemies* both to the *Historians* and the *History*; and if any of these things had been *convicted of falsehood*, would not the *credit* of the whole *Gospel* have (at once) been *utterly overthrown*?

I conclude therefore, that in respect of *internal Arguments for belief*, no *History* hath, or indeed can have any advantage above the *History of the New Testament*.

2. *As for External Arguments*, I can but name them. Though the whole world interessed themselves against the *story* (so examinable as you have heard) though the *Books* were extant while the *memory* of things was *recent*, *Mattbew* within *seven years*, *Mark* within *eleven*, *Luke* about *twenty four*, *post mortem Christi*; the *Epistles* of

Peter

Peter and Paul within thirty years, all the rest, *intra unius hominis aetatem*, yet no man could ever convince them of falsehood.

The stories were received by men of the greatest Wisdom, Learning, and Virtue amongst the Greeks and Latines. Many of the hardest passages were attested and confessed by Enemies and Unbelievers.

The Authors owned by Julian: the ^c *Cyrill c.* Miracles confessed by *Celsus*: the ^{10. c. Jul.} ^b *Orig. c.c.* checking of the operation of the Devil ^c *Euseb.* by *Porphyrius*: ^d the *Darkness* and ^d *Tertio Hi-* *Earthquake* at the *death of Christ* by ^{storiarum,} ^{citat. d. Ju-} *Thallus* and *Phlegon Trallianus*: ^e the ^{11. Afr. 3.} *Crucifixion of Christ* (by *Pilat* under ^{Chronogr.} ^{Orig. c.c. 13.} *Tiberius*) by *Tacitus*: And in one ^e *15. 44.* word, *The entire Volume of the Scri-* ^{Annalium.} *ptures, the very same which our Church* receives (by virtue of the belief of the *History of the Gospel*) ^f before any ^g *Athanas.* *general Council, or the time of Constan-* ^h *Synops.* *tine, without any Convocation of the* ⁱ *Conf. ad* ^j *p. p. Nicaea,* *Clergy, or imperial Edict for that pur-* ^k *Vide Theo-* *pose, was instinctu quodam Chri-* ^{dore. l. 1.} ^{c. 6. Gr. *Kiano, generally received by all Chri-* ^{Lat. Pan.} *stians,*}

Against the

stians, and the world made Christians. Ley
{bec

In respect of all these Argument took internal and external, I might have justly said, that the History of the Le
ple c
sed. Gospel hath the advantage of any Le other History; but seeing there are some particulars wherein the advantages are super-eminent, I shall speak upon little of that distinctly by it self, and so conclude. night

2. These advantages I shall reduce to two heads, *Testimonium Rei.* could away

Dei. Th

1. For the *Testimonium Rei*, consider, con Peter
mong
and s
John

1. *Opposition to the Gospel.*
2. *Prevailing of the Gospel.*

1. Never any story was so much opposed as the Books and History of the New Testament, by Jews and Gentiles, by the World and by the Devil. dred
on th
threa
to s

The beginnings and propagation of the Gospel was by the Jews maliciously and strenuously opposed in the time of Christ and his Apostles, and in all succeeding Generations. sus.
W
mong
ran u

Ley

Left all men should believe in Christ Joh. 11.48
(because of his Miracles) the Rulers
took counsel to destroy him, the Peo-
ple cryed out to have him Crucified.

Left the last errore (as they called Mat. 27.64
it) should be worse than the first, they
sealed up his Sepulchre, and set a watch
upon it; and lastly, suborned the soul-
diers to say, that his Disciples came by
night while they were sleeping (how
could they know this?) and stole him
away.

That the first Miracle wrought by
Peter and John might not spread A&T. 4. 6.
among the People, the Rulers and Elders
and Scribes, Annas and Caiaphas, and
John and Alexander, and all the Kin-
dred of the High Priest, laid hands up-
on them, and put them in hold, and
threatned and commanded them not
to speak at all in the Name of Je-
sus.

When Stephen had uttered his testi- A&T. 7. 57.
mony, the people cried with a loud
voice, and stopped their Ears, and
ran upon him with one accord, and

cast him out of the city, and stoned him.

Act.9.3. Wherever they met with *Believers, Men or Women*, they *haled them into Prison, breathing out threatenings and slaughter.* Wherever they met with the *Preachers*, they *opposed and Act.13.45 blasphemed*, they *tumultuated*, they ^{14.2.} *stirred the Gentiles*, they ^{13.50.} *encouraged the chief men of the Cities and the honourable women against them.*

The instances of their *malicious opposition*, in all *ages* of the *Church*, are so many as are not to be numbered in a few *Minutes*, but would require many *days* only to *name them.*

*They first stirred up Nero to persecute the Christians, they contrived the Eus.1.4.15. death of Polycarpus, they stood by, and insulted over the dying Martyrs; in a word, whoever shall read the stories of primitive times, he will find that the *Jews* were generally the *setters and Informers* against the *Martyrs*, and the *Brokers* for their *Goods* after *Execution*: And the *Histories* of our*

our own and other Nations will shew us the *height* of their *malice*, and the *continuance* of it.

Now, beside the little Nation of the Jews, the rest of the whole world, when this *History* began to be published, and the *Books* written, were Heathen, universally devoted to the Devil, whom therefore our *Saviour* styles, the *Prince* of this world.

And now that *feud* which had depended betwixt the *seed* of the *Serpent* and the *seed* of the *woman* 4000 years, was by the *preaching* and *writing* of these *things* brought to a *crisis*.

The professed and declared design of the Gospel, was to drive the Devil out of his Dominion; Notwithstanding the antiquity of his possession, the universality of his Church, and the consent of all Nations, whereby he held his title. Notwithstanding his Empire was supported by Governours and Laws, and fortified by the Arms and actual strength of all the world, he saw, that if the Gospel were not sup-

pressed, a little time would spoil the pride of all his glory, that in a moment he should fall like lightning from Heaven.

Deut. 7.

That he should be exorcised out of the bodies which he possessed: That his famous Oracles should soon be put to silence: his gorgeous Temples and Images should be torn down, his Mysteries and lying wonders set at nought: That Prayers and Vows would be made to him no more, and he should cease to be celebrated in the Songs of his Poets, and Hymns of his Hierophantæ.

That his revelling Festivals would be turned to mourning, no more gifts would be presented, no beasts, nor children, women or men sacrificed upon his Altars.

The Contention was *de rerum summa* (*pro aris & focis*) and his rage was kindled accordingly: He summons together all his wiles and stratagems, he musters all his forces, he sounds an Allarm to the world, stirs up young and old, rich and poor, all ages,

ages, sexes, conditions, the people
wise and unwise, the *Common Souldiers* *Orig. c. c.*
and *Commanders, Counsellors and t. i.*
Judges, Senate and Emperours, by
suppressing these *Books*, and destroying
the *Believers* of them, to *erase the memory* of the *Gospel*, and *abolish* it for
ever.

The people were *enraged* against the
Believers, as against the *common Enemy* of *mankind*, and *pro solenni suo*,
they *slandered* them with unthought
of *wickedness*, they *imputed* to them
all the *calamities* of the *world*: And
required them to *death*: *Si Tiberis a-*
scendit in mœnia---Christianos ad Leo-
nes---

Against these *Books*, the *Learned*
employed their *Learning*, and the
Witty employed their *Wit*. *Celsus*,
Porphyrius, *Jamblichus*, *Hierocles*, and
other *Philosophers*, endeavoured to
dispute them out of the *world*. *Sym-*
machus and *Libanius*, and other *Rhe-*
tors to *declaim* them away. *Julian*
and *Lucian* and other *scoptick wits*,
endeavoured to *jeer* and *droll* away
the *credit* of them. Mean

Mean while the *Senators* and *Lawyers* employ themselves to *destroy* the *Books*, by *stretching* against them the *ancient Laws* against bringing in *Foreign Religions*, and against *Magical* and *Fatidical Books*: And to *destroy Books* and *Believers* by *New Laws* made for that purpose, against ^{10.97.} *Combinations* (*Heteriae*) *Sacrilege*, *Treason*, the *Law* that none should *buy* or *sell*, or *draw water* without *Thurification* to the *Gods*, and the like.

By force of these they persecute the Believers, as *Enemies* to the *Commonwealth*, and *Traytors* to the *Emperour*, as *sacrilegious* persons, and *contemners* of *Religion*.

The *people* sometimes *rising* upon them without any *Edict*, sometimes by *virtue* of *Edict's Imperial* or *Proconsular*.

From the beginning of the Gospel to the end of Dioclesian and Maximian, this was the *state* of *Believers*.

Their *Scriptures* were *forbidden* to be *read*, and required to be *burned*; their

their *Oratories* and (*obscure*) *Churches* were pulled in pieces ; their *Estates* were plundered and *confiscate* ; their *bodies* were *imprisoned* and *tormented* ; *Fire* and *sword*, *hot Iron Chairs* and *Coffins*, *Gridirons*, and *Cauldrons*, *Hooks*, *Stakes*, and *Gibbets*, the *Teeth* of *Lions*, and *Tygers*, &c. were their *portion*.

It cannot be shewed, that ever any Book or Story met with equal Opposition.

2. Consider then how it prevailed, how quickly and largely, how deeply and effectually, although the *Precepts* were not contrived to sollicit the *Affections*, nor the *Doctrines* to court the *Reason* of men.

At one Sermon of Peter 3000, at another 5000 were converted : Within a few years after the *death of Christ* we find by S. Peter, that the *Gospel* ^{1 Pet. 1.1.} was preached throughout *Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia* ; and Paul had planted it from *Jerusalem* round about to *Ilyricum* : Besides what was done by other *Apostles*, in the Provinces assigned them at the *Council of Jerusalem*. Within

Act. 2. 41.

Act. 15.

Lib. 10.
Epist. 97.

Within 66 years this grane of Mustard seed was become a Tree, Pliny Proconsul of Bithynia (to whom the care of Religion, *ex officio*, did appertein) appointed by Trajan to suppress the Christians, he writes to him, that this Belief was *Longè latèq; diffusa Civitates, Vicos, Agros, impletos Christi cultoribus.*

During the second Century, it had shot out great branches, the boughs of this Tree were stretched out, *Hesterni sumus & vestra omnia implevimus.* Tertullian reckons up the known parts of the World, *in quibus omnibus Christi nomen regnat*, and concludes, *ubiq; porrigitur, creditur, colitur, regnat, adoratur.*

And lastly, During the third (a morte Christi) the *Fowls of the air, and Beasts of the field* lodged under the shadow of it: The Net drew good and bad to shore; the Roman Emperour and Empire declared themselves Christians, i.e. Believers and Assertors of these Books: So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

It went on conquering and to conquer, not by the spirit of the sword, but by the sword of the spirit; the powers of the Earth, and the gates of Hell could not withstand it; it drove the Devil away with all his Temples, Idols, Oracles, Priests, Sacrifices, Services, like lightning: So fell the Dragon, the old Serpent that deceived the World, he was cast out with all his train.

So fell Lucifer the Son of the morn, his Friends and his Followers lamenting.

How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer the Son of the morning! Desolata Templa rarissimus Victimarum emptor! Some complain of people forsaking of the Gods, others of the Gods forsaking their Oracles and Temples, and becoming useless to the world: Pliny. Porphy. He said I will ascend into Heaven, and exalt my Throne above the Stars, but he was soon brought down to Hell.

For the Gospel like Leaven or Fire from Heaven, seized upon all that stood before it; it leaven'd Cities, Islands, Castles,

Against the

Tert. Ap. 37 Castles, Councils, Camps, the Tribes
and Decuries, the Palaces, Senate,
Pleading-places.

It took possession of the Learned,
and the *Wise*, the greatest and noblest
Wits of the *Eastern* and *Western Nations*: *It raised up Philosophers to confound the Philosophy*, and *noble Orators to confound the Rhetorick* where-
with it was opposed.

Against *Celsus* it excited *Origen*,
against *Porphyrie*, *Apollinarius*, & *Me-
thodius*; against *Porphyrie* and *Hiero-
cles*, *Lactantius* and *Eusebius* (besides
what was written *sparsim* by *Jerom*,
Augustine, *Cyril*, &c.) *It set up Chry-
sostom* against *Libanius*, *Prudentius*
against *Symmachus* and the *Rhe-
tiorians*.

*And as it spread it self large and
high, so where it took possession, it
took a deep possession, *Quantum ver-
tice---tantum radice*: Those that re-
ceived it truly, received it in the *love*
thereof, it took possession of their
hearts: it penetrated their *spirits*, and
took its *lodging* in the inmost recesses
of*

of the soul. The *Contents of these Books* was their most precious Pearl, and they *hid* it in their heart. The *Books themselves* were their greatest *worldly treasure*, and rather than they would *deliver* them to be *burned*, they chose to suffer the *loss of honour, liberty, estate, Wives, and Children*, nay even *life* it self. When *Dioclesian* required the *Scriptures* that they might be *burned*, In one *Province* (*Egypt*) in one *Month*, 17000 persons chose rather to *dye* than to *deliver* them: In ^{Eus. l. 8. c. 3} *comparison* of these they *counted* not their *lives* dear to them; the *love* of them was *stronger* than *Death*, many *waters* could not *quench* it, neither could the *flouds drown* it. *This was Testimonium Rei, and an advantage above all other Histories, or Writings in the World.*

2. *Moreover they had Testimonium Dei.* Indeed all that is already *spoken* is an evidence of a *Divine assistance*: But more *particularly*, God gave *Testimony* to these *Books*, by

1. *Their*

1. Their operation upon Believers of them.

2. His co-operation with Believers of them.

1. The Gospel which they contain, was the power of God to every true Believer. That which no Institution in Philosophy, nor Initiation in the *Mysteries* of any of the Gods, was ever ^{Vide Orig. Cels. l.3.} able to accomplish, that was every where atchieved by the belief of the Gospel, in a moment. Like a charm from Heaven, it stilled the passions, and mortified the lusts of men. What a Beadroll doth Paul reckon up in the *Corinthians*: *But ye are washed (saith he) but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.*

Notwithstanding all the calumnies thrown upon Believers, and the prejudice wherewith they were loaded, the unpropitious and reluding world were forcibly convinced that the Believers of these Books were effectually taught to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and

*Last. de
fals. sap.
l.3.c.26.*

and godly in this present world: through the cloud of ignominy where-with they were encompassed, their innocence broke forth as the light, and their just dealing as the noon day; the piety, loyalty, justice, charity, magnanimity, patience, meekness, and purity of Believers of these Books, convinced the unbelieving world, that God was in them of a truth: for they teach as having Authority and Power, and not as the writings of other scribes.

2. But beside the operation of these Books upon the Believers, God was pleased to give testimony to them by his co-operation with them in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds.

The History of the Gospel tells us, that when Christ was even now leaving the world, he left this Legacy to Believers for confirmation of the truth of the Gospel; These signs (said he) shall follow them that believe; *In my name they shall cast out Devils; Mar.16.17* speak with new tongues; Take up ser-pents; If they drink any deadly thing,

it shall not hurt them; They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Now that this was made good, and that these signs (so long as there was need) were continued among Believers, we have as good assurance as we can have of any thing beyond our own memory or experience.

They have been delivered to us by a Cloud of Witnesses; by men of the greatest Wisdom and Learning in their Generations, by persons of such integrity, that they laid down their lives in testimony of their veracity; delivered not by hear-say, but upon their certain knowledge; delivered in their Disputations with, and Apologies to the Adversaries of Christianity, with a challenge to the examination of the truth, or a conviction of the falsehood of them. Instances are very numerous, I shall produce only a very few.

Dial. cum
Tryphon.

Justin the Martyr (who suffered Anno 165) affirms to Trypho the Jew, that these supernatural gifts were found in his time among Christians.

Irenæus

Irenaeus an Auditor of Polycarp, who was a Disciple of S. John (suffered circa 206) affirms upon his own knowledge, that the gift of Prophesie was then frequent in the Church, that ^{Iren. l. 22. c. 56.} many had the gift of tongues, ^{Eus. b. 5. c. 7.} ^{item c. 20.} ipsi audi-
vimus; Others cast out Devils, Others healed Diseases, Others raised the dead; and those raised persons continued many years amongst them, pro certo.

Tertullian in his *Apologetica adversus Gentes*, affirms that *Jam de vobis Daemonas ejiciunt.*

Origen against *Celsus*, saith, that he himself had seen by invocation of God, and the Name of Jesus very many that were delivered from grievous maladies, *ἀπ' ἴνσαντος* (alienatione mentis) *μαρτυρῶ καὶ ἀλλού μαρτυρῶ.*

Not to mention others, S. Augustine in his *Book de Civitate Dei* (begun about 410, but many years in writing) l. 22. c. 8. gives an account of very many Miracles done at Hippo, Carthage, and other places, of no great distance, noting times, places, persons,

Against the

occasions, appealing to the Country, delivering them under terms of the greatest assurance; *Scio ego; cognosco ego; nos interfuius, & oculis nostris aspeximus*: And in his Retractations, *Ea quæ cognoscimus neq; reserare neq; enumerare possumus.*

Other Histories and Writings, and the Authors and Believers of them can pretend no higher than to the testimony of men, these have the testimony of God also: If we believe the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. I conclude therefore, that there is greater Reason to believe the History of the New Testament than any other History in the world.

The sum of all is this, The Divine Authority of the Scriptures is the great fundamental and comprehensive Principle of Christianity, which being admitted it stands, and being removed it presently falls to the ground,

Against this therefore the great Enemy of Religion in these later days (under pretence of Reason and Philosophy) directs his Forces, and is said

to

to have found a success very pernicious and deplorable.

I humbly conceive that the *Resolution of the belief of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures into the Decrees of Popes, or Determinations of Councils* with those who call themselves *Roman-Catholicks*, into *private impulses and dictates of the Spirit* with the *Enthusiasts*, and into the *Laws and Edicts of Princes and Magistrates* with our new pretenders to *Reason* and *Philosophy*, is that engine whereby the Devil hath prevailed to scandalize the world and cast it into *Antiscriptural infidelity*.

It is for this cause that I have conceived it requisite (after many others who have done worthily) to have recourse (once more) to the *Original Reason* of things, and the common *Vide Philos. Essay.* grounds whercupon *mankind* doth proceed in matters of this *nature*.

Where (hoping that I have escaped the *absurdity of begging the matter in Question, discoursing in a circle, and the inconveniences of some other methods*)

thods) I have endeavoured to demonstrate: That supposing the *truth* of the New Testament, both 1. The Old Testament, and 2. The New Testament are to be received as of *Divine Authority*.

3. And supposing *matters of fact* to be truly *related*, the *Doctrinal parts* are to be *believed*.

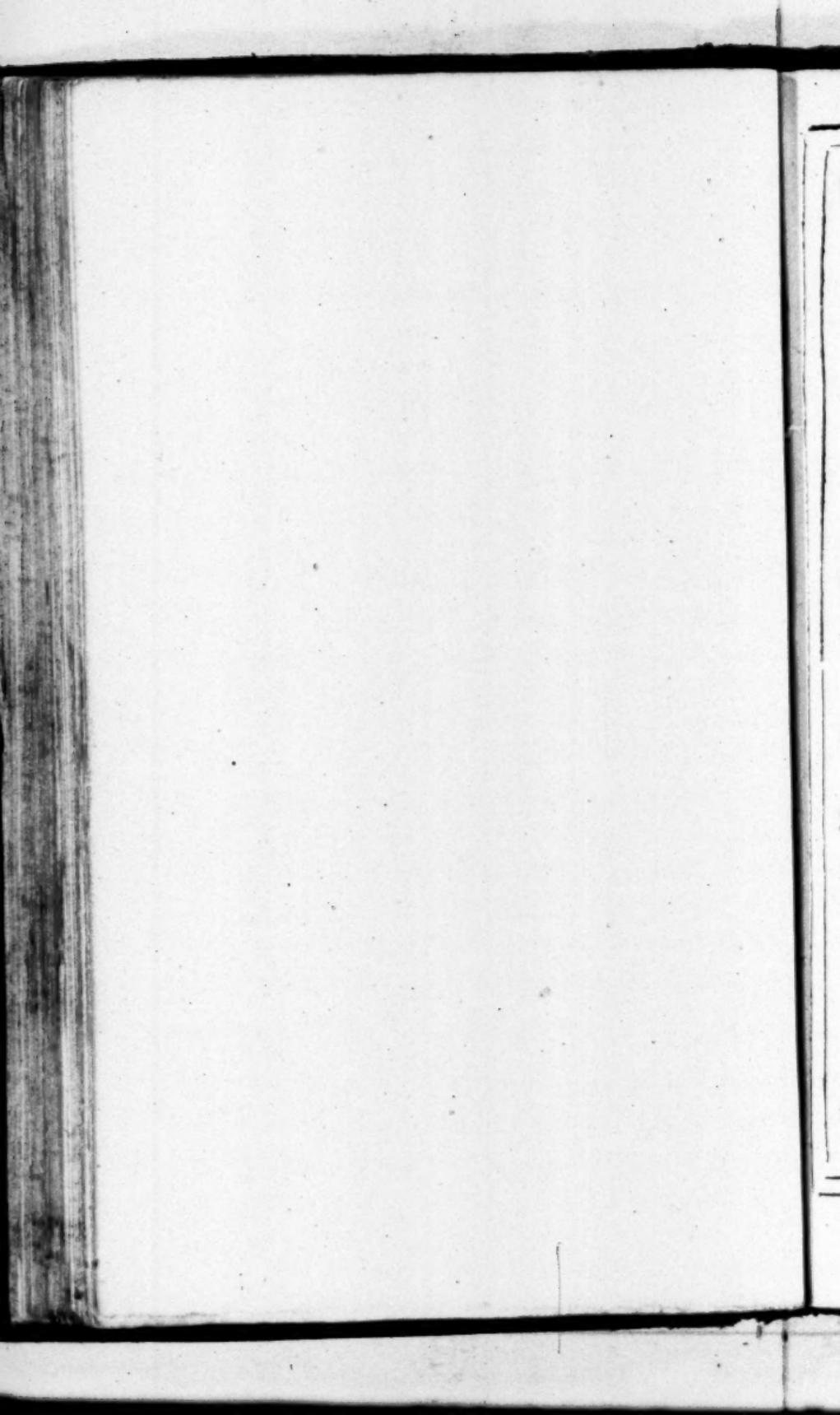
4. For the *Historical Relation* of *matters of fact*, that there is no ground to *dis-believe* it.

That for the *Reception* of it, it hath
1. All the *advantages* whereof an *History* is capable.

2. Far greater *advantages* than any other *History*.

Wherefore I conclude, that *All the Scriptures* (i. e. the *Canonical Books of the Old Testament* and the *Books of the New Testament*) were given by *inspiration of God*. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

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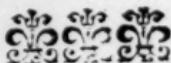


CONCERNING
THE
Sinfulness }
Danger } of Infidelity.
Remedies }

A
SERMON
Preached at *Whitehall*,

Feb. 16. 1668.

BY
SETH *Lord Bishop of Sarum.*



LONDON,
Printed for *James Collins*, at the Kings-
head in *Westminster-hall*. 1670.



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THE
SINFULNESS
O F
INFIDELITY.

Heb. III. 12.

Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.--Exhort one another daily. ---



Shall not spend time in a disputation concerning the Author of this Epistle, *viz.* whether it were *Paul*, or *Barnabas*, or *Luke*, or *Clemens*, or *Apolllos*, &c. but shall with the Church of England, suppose *S. Paul* to have been the Author of it.

If the Author of it be not infallibly knownen, this ought not to detract from its Authority.

Most of the other *Epistles* have been acknowledge'd to be of divine Authority, because they were known to have proceeded from *Apostolical writers*.

This (on the *contrary*) hath been concluded to be an *Apostolical Epistle*, propter τῆς φρεστοῦ καὶ γραψαντοῦ *Characterem*, by reason of that divine and *Apostolical Spirit*, which to those who have had their *Senses* exercised, hath manifestly appeared in it.

If it were lawful (in this sense) to compare spiritual things with spiritual; I should not fear to affirm, that this *Epistle* hath in it some *peculiar advantages*; Compared with some other of the *Epistles*. (*Advantages*, I mean, of usefulness, not of Authority, seeing all of them issued from the same *Spirit*.)

The *design* of it is *General, Fundamental, Comprehensive, not Private, Circumstantial, Occasional*; And it hath peculiarly conveyed to the *Church* two great treasures. §. *A Compleat Model.*

or System, of *Christian Divinity*. And
2. the Way of that *Analogy*, and manner
of ratiocination, whereby the *true Spirit*, and meaning of the *Types* and *Prophesies* of the *Old Testament* is to be
found out and applied.

It was directed to the *Hebrews*; That
is, to those of the *Jewish Nation*, who
had received the *Gospel*, and made a
Profession of Christianity. And the
main *Scope* and *design* of it, is to pre-
serve the *Professors* of Christianity
from *Apostacy* and *Infidelity*.

The *means* used to this purpose; are
partly *Didactical*, and partly *Protrepti-
cal*; *Demonstrating* the truths of the
Gospel, and then *urging* the Professors
of those truths, to be *stedfast* in the
faith, and to beware of *Infidelity*.

The *Method* here used is a *mixt me-
thod* of *Doctrine* and *Application*; *Dog-
matical* truths and *pathetical Exhorta-
tions* continually interwoven.

He begins with the *Great foundation* ^{Chap. 1.}
of our *faith*. *Christ* is the *Son of God*,
the *brightness* of his *glory*; *better* then
the *Angels*. *Wherefore* if the *Word* ^{Chap. 2.}
spoken by *Angels* was *stedfast*, *how*

4. The Sinfulness

shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

Chap. 3.

5. 6. 7. 8.

6.

3. 5.

From the *Comparison* of *Christ* with *Moses*, he concludes against Hardness of Heart and Infidelity.

He demonstrates the *Priesthood* of *Christ* to be more *Excellent* than that of *Aaron*; and in the *midst* of his *argument*, he falls into an *Application*, or *Corollary*, concerning the dreadful Condition of them that fall away.

This is his design, and method, thorowout the Epistle; *Whatever Doctrine* he is upon, this is still the *drift* and *aim* of all his *Applications*, namely to *preserve* the *Professors* of *Christianity*, from *Apostacy* and *Infidelity*.

The words, which I have chosen, are a *Reiteration* or *Reinforcement* of an *Application*, or *Corollary*, arising from the *Consideration* of the *Excellency* of *Christ* above *Moses*. *Moses* was faithful in the house as a *Servant*; *Christ* as a *Son*, over his *own* house. This house are we if we hold fast *our* *faith*.

Wherefore as the *Holy Ghost* saith,
Harden not your hearts—

Take

Take heed brethren, lest —

I say, the words are an *Use of Exhortation*, and in them are considerable;

1. The Persons to whom directed: Professors of Christianity, expressed in the Word *Brethren*.

2. Matter or Object about which it is conversant, *Unbelief*: heart *unbelief*.

3. Form of Exhortation *by way of Caveat*. *Βλέπετε*. take heed.

Now every *Caveat* implies,

1. Evil in the thing.

2. Danger of the thing.

3. That there are wayes and means to prevent it. This is implied in the *Caveat*, and expressed in words following.

My design, at this time, will be to enforce the Exhortation of the Text: And seeing that every Application is a *Consequence* or *Corollary* arising from some *Antecedent Proposition*, and the force of it is finally resolved into the truth and evidence and concernment of that *Antecedent*: Therefore it will be necessary to draw out that *Antecedent* by reflecting briefly upon the Text as it lies in the *Series* of the Epistle.

3. 1.
6. 4.

I. Then, for the *Persons*. They are here styled *Brethren*, and elsewhere, *Holy Brethren, Partakers of the heavenly Calling*. They were *Qualifiers*, baptized into the *Profession* of the *Gospel*, they had *tasted* of the *Word of God*, and the power of the world to come.

II. The *Matter*. *Unbelief*, or rather *Disbelief*, (not Negative Infidelity, but a positive Revolting from the faith which they had professed) *Generally*, a Disbelief of the *Word of God*; *Particularly*, a Disbelief of the *Gospel*, as to the *Doctrines*, or *Promises*, or *Threatnings* thereof.

III. For the *Form* that which is here expressed by *βλέπετε* (look to it) is in the other forms of *Exhortation*, throughout the Epistle, expressed by termes of the greatest *Emphasis* and *earnestnes* imaginable, *Let us Fear* lest we fall short, 4. 1.

Labour to enter, 4. 11.

Use diligence, not be slothful, 6. 11, 12.

Press earnestly, draw near, hold fast, 10. 22.

Secto-

επιποτέρως προσέχειν μὴ πολέ μα-
εργόν πούσθμον. Let us give more dili-
gent heed lest by any means we should
let it slip, 2.1.

So that the Summe of the Apostles
Argumentation is this: *The last resolu-
tion of all the Obligation of men, is into
reasons of Duty and of Interest.*

If there be *Wickedness* in *Infidelity*, it is matter of *Duty*, if there be
Danger in it, and *Danger* of it, it is mat-
ter of *Interest* and *Concernment* to Be-
ware of it.

This *Heart of Unbelief* is an *Evil*
heart (χαρδία πονηστή) there is *Wicked-
ness* in it. It grieves the Spirit of God;
It provoked him so, that he sware in his
wrath, that he would take *Vengeance*
for it: there is *Danger* in it. Yet it was
a thing *Ordinary* and *common* amongst
the *Fathers* of these Hebrews, it was
neque *Novum*, neque *Rarum*, There is
Danger of it.

“ It is the *Duty* and *Concernment*
“ of every one *Professing Christianity*
“ to take heed lest there be in them an
“ *heart of Unbelief*; and to use all means
“ to prevent it. This is the *Ante-
cedent.* Where-

Wherefore take heed brethren, &c.—
(which is the Exhortation by way of
Caveat; — *Exhort one another daily*,
&c. which is the way to prevent it.

So then for the enforcement of the
exhortation upon the whole matter, I
am to speak

I. *Of the Evil of Infidelity.*

II. *Of the Danger of falling into it.*

III. *Of the meanes of preventing it.*

And then to conclude with

IV. *The Exhortation of the Text.*

1. In speaking of the *Evil of Infidelity*, I shall not discourse at large, but confine my self to an enquiry into two pretenses (Which having been broached in the late times of *Infidelity* towards the King, are said to have operated very far towards a general *Apostacy* from the faith, and the production of *Infidelity towards God*) both which appealing to the tenor of the *Scriptures*; must be examined by them.

2. The first is of a famous Author, and it is this, That the *Scriptures* do not make *Infidelity* to be a *Sin*, at the time of the delivery of the *Scriptures*.

The

The second is of a *Writer more obscure*, but in it self, so agreeable to the *C.W.* disposition of the present generation, that it hath possessed the minds of many; it is this, that

Although Infidelity (according to the Scriptures) in the times of Christ and his Apostles, were sinful, and inexcusable; yet in our times, it is excusable. These are the pretences to be examined.

The Substance of the Gospel, as it immediately relates to Christian duty, is summarily reduced to the *Doctrines* and *Injunctions* of our Lord Christ, and his *Apostles*.

The Author of *Leviathan* (cap. 42. pag. 286.) tells us in plain terms, that "We do not read any where (in the Scriptures) that they which received not the *Doctrine of Christ*, did therein *Sin*."

" And again, that the *Injunctions* of *Christ*, and his *Apostles*, men might refuse without *sin*.

Now concerning this assertion I cannot chuse but say, that had I not been acquainted with the works of that author

thour (especially those relating to religion) I should exceedingly wonder at it, because it *supposes* men never to look into their Bibles, which is the thing it would persuade.

Mat. 24.42. In the 21. of Matth. Our Saviour asks the **Fewes** this question, *Did ye never read in the Scriptures such a thing?* a question which I must repeat to the *Assertors* of this *doctrine*. Did they *never read in the Scriptures the Sinfulness, the Danger, the Heinousness of Infidelity?* Surely he that runs may read it.

Luc. 9.41. Our Saviour Christ, before his death, did *oftentimes* vehemently rebuke his Disciples, for *Infidelity*, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I endure you? (Quousque tandem abutemini patientiâ nostrâ) And after his **Resurrection**, he calls them *fools* and *slow of heart*, for *unbelieving*: Did they *never read these Increditations?*

The *Author* of this *Epistle*, and the rest of the *Apostles*, do every where *vehemently* and *earnestly dehort* from *Unbelief*. *Did they never read these Dehortations?*

In the 8 of **John**, Christ tells the **Fewes**,

Fews, that if they believe not, they ^{Jo. 3. 24.}
shall dy in their Sins. That the wrath of ^{3. 36.}
God abideth on them, that he that be-
lieveth not, is damned already. Did
they never read these *Denunciations*?

Yes ! these last, it seems this Author
had read, & as his manner is, thinking he
could accommodate an answer to these,
he hath pronounced securely of all the
rest: *To these he saith that they import*
onely a non-remission of the sins com-
mitted against the laws of their Country;
(that they should dy in them;) but that
they do not evince, any sinfulness to be
in Infidelity; Wheretore I must crave
licence to proceed.

The *Apostle* in the 21 of the *Revela-* ^{4.}
tions, give a Catalogue of such sinners as ^{R. 21. 8.}
are of the *bigest rank*, Such as are most
abominable in the eyes of God, Such as
are to have their *portion* in that *lake*
which burneth with fire and *brimstone*,
and he puts *Unbelievers* in the head of
this Regiment The *fearful* and “*Un-*
“*believers*, and *Abominable*, and *Mur-*
“*therers*, and *Whoremongers*, and *Sorce-*
“*rers*, and *Liars* shall have their portion
“in that lake.

But

Obj. 1. But it may be, perhaps; that the Scripture doth not in plain and express termes, affirm Infidelity to be Sinful!

Ref. 1. The Text tells us plainly and expressly, that an heart of unbelief is *κακόν πονεῖ* (not *κακόν* but *πονεῖ*, not incommodious but wicked.)

Obj. 2. But Philosophers and Mathematicians (pretending Strictnes & demonstration in discourse) regard not general words; but have recourse to the Definitions of things, and from thence proceed to affirm or deny the Attribution which is under question. Let us therefore have recourse to the definition of Sin.

Those who have spoken most accurately concerning the nature of Sin, they have resolved, that the formal notion of it, consists in a departure from God. it is *Aversio à Deo, & Conversio ad creaturam.*

Jer. 2.12. In the second of Feremy, and 12. we find the Prophet as it were in *furore sacro* (in a prophetic rage) breaking forth into this Exclamation. "Be astonished, O ye heavens, be ye horribly afraid, be very desolate saith the Lord! What ailes the Prophet to cry so loud?"

to make the heavens resound his *Exclamation*! my people (saith he) have committed two Great evils, they have Forsaken me, that's the first. An heart of unbelief, is an evil heart, in departing from the living God.

It is true that the *Spirit* of God in the *Scriptures*, doth not usually descend to *Logical accuracy*, to the *quatenus*, or *Causality*, to the observation of the rules of *κατὰ παρόντας*, *καὶ αὐτὸν*, *καὶ οὐς πρώτον*.

And this makes it oft-times, harder to deal with men of perverse minds, then many do imagine. But the more rare this is, the more you will take notice of the *Providence*, when you shall consider, how accurately, and how fully, the *Scripture* hath determined that which is in *Question*.

In the 16. of *Joh. 8.* our Saviour Ioh. 16.8.
tells them, that the *Spirit* shall rebuke 3.18.
the world of *Sin*, of *righteousness*, of 15.
Judgement: Of *Sin*, Because they believe not on him. *Joh. 3. 18.* he that believeth not is *Condemned*, because he believeth not. *Ἄνθη ἐστιν ἐν κρίσις*, the *rejection* of the *Gospel* is said to be the

the very Condemnation, So expressly is, the *καὶ αὐτὸς*, delivered to us, (by *Causal* and *Identical* propositions) in the Scripture; Who is it now, that can *persuade* us, that the *Scriptures* do not affirm, any *Sinfulness* to be in Infidelity?

Yes verily! the *Scriptures* not only teach us, that *unbelief* is a *sin*, but they teach us likewise

6. The *Heinousness* and *Aggravation*, the *Sinfulness* and *Punishment* of this *Sin*.

It was *this* that brought all other *sin* into the *World*; and every *Premeditated sin* arises from it. It *hardens* the *heart*, and *fears* the *Conscience*, and makes it bid *defiance* to the *Lord of Glory*.

Concerning *David* we read in the *Psalms*, that once he said in his *Ha* that *all men are liars*, did he *revoke* when he was at *leisure*? No, the more he thought of it, the higher he proceeds, and becomes the more assured in this charge; *Surely* (saith he) *Men of low degree are vanity*, and *men of high degree are (not liars but) a Lie*. Yet

one gives the *lie* to one of these *lyars*, it is the utmost provocation ; it is the *flasted word of defiance*, concluded fit to Neh. 23. 19. *justify the Duel or the Stab*. On the other side, God glories in this, that he is *not a man* that he should *lie*, that the strength of Israel will not lie, yet *infidelity* gives him the *lye*. “ *He that believeth not God makes him a Liar*. (1 Joh. 5. 10.)

7. I desire to know what is that *exterior*, whereby the *Heinousness* of any sin is to be estimated.

Is it the *denunciation of Future Vengeance*? “ The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking Vengeance upon Unbelievers, and they shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord and from the presence of his power.

Is it *Old or New, Past, or present Instances of Vengeance*? Were not the body of this people newly cut off for unbelief? And of ancient dayes, whose were the *Carcasses* that fell in the *Wilderness*; and to whom did God swear in his

Heb. 3. wrath, that they should *not* enter into his rest, but to them that *believed not*?

Consider but the story, from whence the *Exhortation* of the Text arises. How God was provoked through unbelief. The text tells us that he was *Moved*, he was *Tempted*, he was *Grived*, he was *Provoked*, till he sware in his wrath —

Ps. 95. The words are taken out of the 95 Psalm, to which the 78. is parallel. They were (saith the Psalmist) a stubborn and rebellious Generation; They tempted God, and spoke against him, Therefore the Lord heard this and was wroth: So a fire was kindled against Jacob and anger against Israel; Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his Salvation — When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel, he gave way to his Indignation, wrath, anger, displeasure and Jealousy.

I conceive, now the first Question to be stated, viz. Whether (according to the tenor of the Scripture) Infidelity were sinful and dangerous, in the time of

of the delivery of the *Scriptures*: I proceed to the second Question, viz. (*However it was in antient times.*)

2. Whether Infidelity, be not in such times as ours Excusable?

My meaning is this: *Whether* (speaking according to Scriptural grounds, and reason) *Now* that *Miracles*, *extra-ordinary gifts* and *Prophesies* are *ceased*, *Infidelity* be not become *Excusable* (however it might be *Sinful* and *inexcusable* during the time when *Prophesies* and *Miracles* were in use?)

The first verse of this Epistle (to the Hebrews) tells us what *powerful* and *noble motives* to believe, God had afforded to the *Fathers*.

God himself was pleased to speak to them, πολυμεγῶς & πολυβόητῶς, at sundry times, and in divers manthers.

In the *Times* of the *Patriarchs*, *Judges*, *Kings*, and *Prophets* by the *Wayes* of *Visions*, *Dreams*, *Voices*, *Similitudes*, *Urim*, and by divers *miracles* and *wonders*.

So likewise, for those that are here exhorted; About the time of the *Writing* of this Epistle; God had spoken

to them by his *Son* (the brightness of his Glory, the image of his person) **A**nd by the *Apostles*, to whom also he bare *Witness*, by mighty signes and wonders, by divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Now that *such men as these*, who had so great advantages to bring them to believe, should be severely punished for *Infidelity*, I am perswaded there is hardly any man, but thinks it very just and reasonable.

That such as had seen the wonders of God, in Egypt and the Wilderness, so manifestly miraculous, so often repeated, and yet for all this would not believe, that their Carcasses should fall in the Wilderness.

That Ananias and Sapphira, who had known the miracles which had been done by the Apostles, should think to Couse[n] the Apostles: it deserved the Judgment that befell them.

As for our selves had we lived in the times of Miracles or Prophesies, we doubt not but we should have believed. Or, as Philip said, shew us the father, and it sufficeth. Could we but once see a miracle

racle, or talk with one returning from the dead ; it should suffice, we would believe.

But seeing it is now many hundreds of yeares, Since these things are ceased, and we have nothing left us, *Præter miraculorum famam* ; It we shall not believe the *Gospel* ; by some it is openly pretended, and by many it is secretly imagined, that, *in this case we may be Excused*.

I could wish that the time would serve, *Clearly to rid away this phantasm* ; In order to it, I shall briefly doe three things.

1. Shew that this *Phantastical* imagination is no new invention but that it hath of old, been the conceit of *Abominable Hypocrites*.

1.

2.

3.

2ly. I shall inquire a little into the grounds of this *Conceit*, and shew the *mistake* of those *suppositions*, into which it is *resolved*.

3ly. I shall shew, that our *Saviour* (Knowing the thoughts of men) hath taken particular care to prevent this *Imagination* ; and hath clearly decided the matter in *Question*.

I. Though the present age be fruitful in inventions tending this way, yet this hath been Anticipated by the Wits of former times.

Luc. 11.47. In the 11 of Luke 47. We finde the Scribes and Pharisees, building the Sepulchers of the Prophets, whom their fathers had killed.

Mat. 23.30 If we would know, what they pretended, in so doing, we shall find it in the parallel place of Matthew. They said, if we had been in the dayes of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them, in the blood of the Prophets.

That these men, did not believe the Prophets, it is manifest; Christ tells them, if they had believed the Prophets, they would have believed him: for they wrote of him,

But that they would have beleived the Prophets, (and not have murthered them) had they lived in their times, this they pretend: and it is very probable they had that opinion.

Yes Verily! had they lived in the dayes of Miracles and Prophesies, they would have believed, the very con-

ceit which is now Pretended !

But the *Truth* is, these men were *abominable Hypocrites*, and the cause of their *Unbelief*, was not the want of *miracles* and *Prophecies* but *Carnal prejudice*, and *Interest*, and the *Vile affections* of their hearts. Did not *Christ* work *miracles*? Was not he that *Prophet* which was to come? Yet they took him, and with wicked hands they *flew him*, and brought upon themselves the *bloud* of all the *Prophets*.

But 2ly. If we shall examine the bottom of this fancy, and resolve it into its *Principles*, we shall finde that it supposes these things.

1. That the *want* of the *sight* of *miracles*, is *sufficient* to *Justifie unbelief*.

2. That to *live* in the *very age* of *miracles*, is apter to create *beleif*, then to be *born* and *educated*, in a *believing nation*, after the *world* hath been *convinced* by the *miracles* of *former times* (which is our *Case*.)

3. That the *bare sight* of *miracles*, is of it self alone, *sufficient* to create *be-*

lief, in every person that should see them.

Of which suppositions, the first is contrary to *common Reason*, and the two later are contrary to *Scriptural Reason*, and to the *experience* of the world.

1. *If the want of the sight of miracles were enough to justifie Infidelity, then for every Dogma to be believed, Every Individual person, were to expect the sight of miracles; which if it should happen, the wonder would cease, and miracles become No miracles, by the frequency of the performances of them, and so they would be inept to create belief.*

Every work of nature, is in it self a miracle; Who would not think it easier to recover a man, (who had all his parts and humours already formed,) from the dead, than from that liquid principle whereof Job speaks, to raise up flesh and skin, bones and sinews: to Advance an understanding creature, capable of Adoring or blaspheming the maker of him? Yet that is a miracle, and this is none, onely through the rarity of one, and frequency of the other. Again

Again, if every one were to see *miracles*, the merit of *faith* would be taken away. "Jesus said unto Thomas, because thou hast seen -- thou hast believed, Blessed are they that have not seen, yet have believed. This for the first supposition.

2. The second is this, that to live in the very age of *miracles*, is apter to create a belief, then to live in a believing nation a good time after the times of *Miracles*.

But, contrary to this, we have instances both in *Jews* and *Gentiles*. After near 4000 years. How pertinaciously doe the *Jews* adhere to *Moses*, against whom their fathers *Murmured*, and *rebelled*, notwithstanding the sight of all his *miracles*; and when he had wrought that great *miracle* upon *Corah* and for his rebellion, the next day they *rebelled again*.

And we find now the whole world, (especially the wiser part) Converted to *Christianity*, whereas the *Apostles* complain of the paucity of professors, and the *Infidelity* of the *Jews*, in the Age of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, was so great

great and *resolute* that it *hath* a fatal operation upon that nation unto this day.

I am sensible, that in the *Comparison* of *later ages* with the *dayes* of *mira-
cles*, I may be thought ~~of~~ *and* *new* *ze-
ter*, and to advance a *paradox*, where that I may not lean on my own understanding, I beseech you to *Consider*, our *Saviours* *decision* of the *Question* which we have in hand.

I suppose, I *may take* it for granted, that the *Condition* of the *Jews* in our *Saviours* *time*, was in respect of *Moses*, the same (as to the matter in *Question*) with our *Condition* in respect of *Christ*.

The *tradition* of the *law*, was accompanied with mighty *Signes* and *wonders*. And so was likewise the *tradition* of the *Gospel*.

In the *times* *succeeding* *Moses*, God for a *Season* continued the sensible *manifestation* of his *presence*, by *miracles*. So he did likewise in the *times* *succeeding* *Christ*.

But before the *time* of our *Saviour* both *miracles* and *Prophesies* had a long *time*

time ceased. We see not our Tokens (saith the Psalmist) there is not one Prophet left; as it is with us at this day.

Onely, they had the books of Moses and the Prophets, Just so Conveighed and propounded to them, as our Scriptures have been to us.

So that, if the Question be proposed concerning those Jews; whether the present miracles of Christ, or the complexity of Motives which they had, to induce them to believe the writings of Moses, were apter to create belief, It is the same with our Question, Whether the living in The time of Miracles, or our Motives; are more powerful to believing. To determine which Question; we may observe; That the Apostles after the sight of all our Saviours miracles, Continued in unbelief, till he had opened unto them the Scriptures, of Moses and the Prophets. That after many miracles, he refers the Jews to the searching of the Scriptures; (bringing them *a notiori ad ignotius.*) And in the 5 of John and the 47. he decides this Question by another, *Jo. 5. 47.* if

“ if ye do not believe the writings of
“ Moses, how shall ye believe my Words:

Thus much concerning the 2 supposi-
tion.

3. The 3 is this, that the sight of
miracles, is of it self alone, sufficient
to bring every person to believing.

We ought indeed to owne it, to the
eternal Glory of our Bleſſed Redeemer,
that the *Faith* of Christians is founded
upon his *Miracles* as well as on his *Do-
ctrine*, and *example*. And he himself
tells the *Jews*, that if he had not done
miracles they should not have had sin
(i. e. the Sin of *Infidelity*). But Now
to dream of *miracles*, and hanker after
them; or to think to *Excuse* our *Infidelity*,
for want of the sight of them,
(as if that alone would certainly make
believers of us all,) it argues that we
have been *loathful* readers of the Scrip-
tures.

It hapned to our Saviours *miracles* as
it did to his *Preaching*; according to
his *parable* of the *sower*. Some of them
lighted upon hearts that were *honest*
and *good*, and brought forth the fruit of
believing. Others fell by the way side,

or

or upon stony places, or among the Thorneſ.

The prepoſſeſſion of their minds, by an expeſtation of a temporal Meſſiah, in the Rulerſ; The fear of perſecution by them in the Peopple; The Cares of the World, and deceiptfulneſſe of riches, The pleaſures and luſtſ, to which the Austerities of the Gopſel-ruleſ, were oppoſit; and Many other prejudices, deeply rooted in the hearts of a pervers and froward Generation, prevailed againſt the ſight of miraclēs; and None were more pervers and reſolute unbelievers, then ſome of thoſe, who had the Advantage of this great argument for believинг.

If the ſight of Miracles alone, were ſufficient to produce believ, in all kinds of Spectatorſ, certainly the Scribeſ and Pharifeeſ, (who by their learning were able to Judge of a miraclē,) the Countrymen and Kinſmen of Christ (with whom he was moſt Converſant,) ſhould have been moſt Eminent in believинг.

But behold the incantment of preju-
dice and Carnal Interēt! In the 5. of
Luke 21. The Pharifeeſ and Doctorſ
ſaw

Luc. 5. 21.

saw the *miracles* of Christ, and yet they concluded him a *Blasphemer*. And when he had healed, him that was boine blind; they (hypocritically) bad the man give *Glory to God*, and said they knew that *Jesus was a sinner*.

John. 9. 24. They turn'd his *miracles* into *wantonness*, fain'd themselves *Just men*, that they might tempt him, i. e. put a trick upon him. demanding a *sign* for *a sight*, onely to satisfy their *wanton Curiosity*.

Matthew. 13. 58. As for his *Country men*, this *Prophet* had *no honour* there, he did *not many miracles*, among them, because of their *unbeleef*. His friends said he, *Mar. 3. 21.* was beside himself, and went to lay hold on him.

John. 6. 10. As for the *People*, In the 6 of *John* we find, that Christ fed 5000 men with 5 loavs and 2 small fishes, so that they said this is of a truth that *Prophet*. But the *Very next day* (ver. 22.) the *Very men* that had *eaten* of the *loaves* (26) Said unto him what *sign* shewest thou that we may believe? what dost thou work! (30.) as if a *miracle* had not been a *Signe*!

He wrought a miracle among the ^{Ma. 5.17.} *Gadarens*, and they *besought* him to be gone. Others were offended at him, and cast him out of their City. *The issue of all his miracles*, was this; *Some* ^{Jo. 7. 12.} said he was a *good man*, *Others Nay!* ^{Jo. 10. 20.} but he *deceiveth the people*. And many said he had a Devil and was mad.

Nay! when he hung upon the cross they acknowledged his *miracles*, and jeered him with them; *He saved others, himself he cannot save*; let him do one more miracle, let him come down from the Cross, and we will believe him. *So Vain is the pretence of those*, who think to excuse their *Infidelity*, because they cannot see a *miracle*! So false are the Grounds of that opinion.

3. Briefly! to bring this Argument to an issue.

3.

If it were granted to these persons, to see a *miracle*, what kind of *miracle* would they *chuse*, to convince their *understandings*, and settel them in *religion*? We are here I confess *in loco Conjecturali*, and no man can tell what *miracle* another man would chuse, but I am *perswaded*, that which

which most men would agree upon, as most conducing to that purpose whereof we are speaking would be this; that to assure them of the *Immortality of the Soul* and of the rewards and punishments of the world to come, and to satisfy their *Curiosity* in some other doubts and *scruples*; They might once be allowed to see and converse with some one, that might rise from the dead who might resolve their *Questions*, concerning the condition of those that are in *Hades*.

3. *I say then*, that our Saviour who knew, what was in man, and needed not that any one should tell him *foreseeing* this *Phantastical* conceit, hath shewed the folly of it, and *preoccupied* this *vain resort*.

Luc. 16. 23. In the 16 of *Luke 27*. *Dives* makes it his request to *Abraham*; that he would send *Lazarus* from the dead; to testify to his brethren, those things which these men dream of.

Abraham refers them to the *Scriptures*, which were in the *same* manner recommended to them as our *Scriptures*

are

are to us. "They have Moses and the
"Prophets, &c. let them hear them.

,, He saith unto him, "Nay fa-
"ther Abraham, but if one went to
"them from the dead, they would
"believe.

And he (Abraham) said "If they
"hear not Moses and the Prophets,
"neither will they be persuaded though
one rose from the dead.

This I take to be a clear and a full de-
termination of the matter in *Question*;
And if any one should imagine, that
this determination was but *Conjectural*,
Our Saviour afterward tries the *Experi-
ment*, and raises another *Lazarus* from
the dead. Ioh. 11.

What was the effect of this mans *co-
ming from the dead*, did it Convert the
High Priest or the Scribes the rulers or
the people; nay, but *from that very
day* they took counsel together how
they might put *Jesus* to death. And
the *Chief Priests Consulted*, how they
might put *Lazarus* to death 53. Also.

Upon these *Considerations*; we may in-
fallibly Conclude, that *Infidelity* in *Such
times as ours*, is *no more excusable*,

C when

then it was in the *dayes of Christ* or his *Apostles*; the times of *miracles* and *prophesies*.

So much of the *first Supposition*, in the *Caveat* of the text, the *Sinfulness* of *Infidelity*, in *General at all times*, *And the Inexcusableness* in *our times*, which makes it our *Duty* to take heed of it;

II. I pass to the *second supposition*, concerning the *Danger* of *falling into it*, which makes it our *concernment* and *Interest* to beware of it. For if this be clear, the *Exhortation* will be *powerful*, *take heed brethren*, &c.

Now, the *Danger* of *falling into infidelity*, is in it self so *conspicuous*, and made so *sensible* by every day's *experience*, that *I wish the proof* of it were *difficult*, so as to *justify a studious & laborious demonstration* of it.

At once, to *shorten my discourse*, and to *remove the suspicion* of any *Satyrical reflexion* upon those that hear me, *I shall shew*, that the *Greatest Advantages*, have not *preserved* the *best of men*, from sometimes *falling into Infidelity*. *Take heed therefore brethren.*

The

The greatest *Helps* and *Advantages* against unbelief. I conceive to be these ensuing.

1. *Evidences of Gods Presence.* 2. Or these lighting on a good understanding. 3. At least upon the Ablest of men. 4. Such as have held Communion with God. 5. or have been eminent for the habit and exercise of faith. 6. or these with warnings to prevent the Danger of falling. 7. And those reiterated. Yet all these, have not preserved good men from sometimes falling. A word of each.

1. First then, to begin with the persons in the Context, What greater *Evidences of the Presence of God* can be Imagined, then they enjoyed; In *Egypt* in their *passage* over the *red Sea*, in the *Wilderness*, “*my presence*, saith “*God, shall go along with you, They were conducted by a Pillar of a Cloud, &c. they were Supported, and Corrected by Visible and palpable instances of Gods power and presence.* Yet they tempted and grieved the *Spirit of God*, by their *Infidelity*, for “*they believed not for all his Wondrous Works.*

2. But these *Jewes* were a *dull* and *stupid* people. If God should once manifest himself, to a *wise* and *understanding* person (Such as we take our selves to be) We may think it impossible to fall into unbelief.

I suppose it will be *no disparagement* to these *Objectors*, to say, that *Solomon* might be as *Wise* and *Knowing*, as *Wary* and *Philosophical* as *they*. And as for the *manifestation* of Gods presence, the *Scripture* tells us Expressly, that *God* appeared to him at *Gibeon*. Where he made a *promise* to him which he performed.

Yet *Solomon* fell into the *grossest Infidelity*: to think there were *Gods* and *Goddesses*, To worship *Asteroth*, the *Goddess* of the *Sidonians*, and *Milcom* the *Abomination* of the *Ammonites*.

3. But it may be yet *Objected*, that *Solomon* did this in the *Dotage* of his years, and his *Dotage* upon his *Idolatrous* wives, which turned away his heart, but that it *could not have* proceeded from him, before his *understanding* was empayred.

Behold then a greater then Solomon ! even *Adam* in his full strength when he was newly made after the similitude of God , a little lower then the Angels. God several times appeared to him in the Garden ; Yet he fell through unbelief , and drew all his posterity into his ruine.

4. But *Adam* though he had perfection of Nature yet he wanted *Grace*, whereby he might have held *Communion* with *God*, which having been once enjoyed, would for ever have kept him from *infidelity* , or *deliberate sin*, which alwayes proceeds from it.

Consider then the case of *David* ! 1 Sam. 16. of whom it is said , that the *Spirit* of ^{13.} *the Lord God came upon him* ; That *God* himself made a *Covenant* with him , and *Swore* unto him by his *holiness*, that he *would not fail him*.

And as for *David* who was like unto him , for *Devotion* and *Zeal*, for *spiritual Communion* and *intercourse* with *God* : He was the *sweet singer of Israel* ; and how often do we find , his *Spirit inebriated* , and transported , in the

Celebration of his *divine* and *ravishing* *enjoyments*.

Yet we find him falling from all this height; and great and terrible was his fall; he went *mourning* for it all his days, and bowed down his head continually.

5. But perhaps it may be thought, that though *David* was an Excellent man, yet seeing his Eminency lay not in the gift of *Faith*, but in *Zeal*, or in some other *Grace*, the *danger* may not yet be so very considerable.

Behold then even *Abraham*: the Darling of the almighty, who conversed with God as a *man* converseth with his *Friend*: to whom God communicated his presence in *Dreams*, in *Visions*, in *Apparitions*, πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυ-*ζητῶς*.

He was *imbued* with the *Habit* of *Faith*. he exerted it in the *noblest* exercises; he manifested it in the *heroical* *degree*; so that he became the *Father* of the *Faithful*.

Yet once we find him *offending* (*tripping*) at this *stone* of *stumbling*; *Equivocating* through *unbelief*.

6 But

6. But all these instances were during the *Ancient Dispensation*, when the *Communication of the presence of God* was *more Obscure*; before the fulness of time was come, when the *word* was *made flesh* and dwelt *amongst men*; and *they saw his glory* as the *glory of the only begotten Son of God*.

Besides! we do *not* find that they were *particularly* and *distinctly* warned of their danger, which may *lessen the Wonder of the fall*.

Consider then the *Case*, of *Peter*, the *first* of the *Apostles*. He had been *closely conversant* with *Christ* during all the time of his *Ministry*. *Was a witness* of his *miracles*, *saw his Transfiguration*, *Heard the Voice* which came to him from the *Excellent glory*, saying *this is my beloved Son*— Psal 1, 19.

As for his *faith*, he it was, that made that *Confession*, upon which the *Christian Church is founded*. And *Christ had prayed* for him that his *faith should not fail*.

He was a *Valiant man*; and he *Undertook* that though he *died*, he would *neither forsake*, nor *deny*, his *Master*.

When Christ forewarns him, plainly and punctually, that his *faith* would fail him. That *very night*, before a certain hour; So that it was impossible he should be surprised.

You know his *Undertakings* and of his *Failings* it is unnecessary to speak.

7. I know nothing now that can be alledged, against the general propensity of all men to Unbeleif, but this, that *Peter* was now *single and alone*, that he failed onely this time; when he was environd with *Bills and Staves* and in Danger of his Life.

Wherfore let us call to mind the *Case of all the Apostles*, in the great Foundation of our *Faith* the *Article of Christs Resurrection*. When these temptations were away.

The *resurrection* of the dead was in those times so commonly believed, that it was conceived of Christ, that he was one of the Old *Prophets* risen from the *Dead*, and *Herod* said he was *John the Baptist* risen from the dead.

Of the *resurrection*, the *Apostles* had seen *Experiments*, in *Lazarus*, and in the

the bodies of the *Saints* which arose.

Concerning Christ's *resurre^{ET}io*, how plainly and often were they forewarned, After he was risen, how often were they told of it. Yet how grossly and often did they fail.

In the 8 of *Mark* 31 Christ tells his ^{Mar. 8.31.} "Disciples, that he should be killed, " and the 3 day he would rise again. He ^{32.} ^{Mar. 9.7.} "spake this saying openly; So open- ^{62.} "ly that the *Jews* took notice of it (this ^{Mat. 26.} deceiver said that the third day he ^{31.} would rise again) moreover he promi- ^{Mar. 16.13.} sed them plainly that after he was ri- ^{13.} sen, he would go before them into *Ga-* *lilee*, and appointed them a certain *Mountain* where they should see him.

Yet after he was risen; *Mary Magda-* *len* told them that he had appeared to her. But they believed not *Mary Magd.* *Joanna*, and *Mary the Mother of James*, told them the same, But their *Speech* seemed to them as *Idle tales*.

The 2 Disciples told the rest, that he had appeared to them going to *Em-* *maus*, but they believed them not.

He appeared in the midst of ten of them at once, shewed them his hands and

and his side, But they believed not for joy.

Luc. 24.41.

Mat. 28.7.

Christ when appeared to the Women, bade them tell the Disciples and Peter, that according to his promise, they should see him in Galilee.

¹⁷ And the 11. Disciples went into Galilee, to a mountain which Jesus had appointed them, And when they saw him, they Worshiped, But some doubted.

Mar. 16.14

So that Christ, almost in his last words, Upbraided them with their Unbelief—because they believed not them who had seen him, after he was risen.

So prone are even the best of men, after their highest attainments, under the best advantages, to fall sometime into Infidelity! So great is the danger of Unbelief!

It is true indeed, that all these, *Mic. 7. 8.* might say with the Prophet, Rejoyce not against me O mine enemy, for though I fall, I shall arise again. Yet “ all these things are written for our learning, that he that thinketh he standeth, may take heed least he fall. If these things have been done to the green tree,

tree, what may be done to the *dry*? If the *worthies* and the *mighty* have *fallen* (how have the mighty fallen?) ought not the *feeble* to take *care*? Yes certainly they ought.

And to use all means to prevent their falling, which is the *third thing*, supposed in the *Caveat*, and expressed in the words following “Take heed brethren least, &c. Exhort one another daily—

Now the *Meanes* to prevent the falling into *Infidelity* are the *Arguments* evincing the *truth* of the *Gospel* which are very *numerous*. Whereof I cannot now speak particularly.

The Apostle in this Epistle makes use of 2. sorts *i.e.*

From { 1. Scriptures of the Old Testament.
2. Common Reason whereof I shall speak a little.

The Argument from Reason is delivered in the 2. Chap. v. 3. 4.

“ The Gospel was delivered by the Lord,
“ and

“ and confirmed (to us) by them that
“ heard him.

“ God also bearing *them* Witness
“ with *Signs and wonders* , and divers
“ *miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost* ,

God bare witness to
Christ the Author of the Gospel:
And to the Apostles, the *Promulgators*
of the Gospel. Wherefore it is to be
believed.

The *Antecedent* of this *Enthymem* is
the sum of what I shall deliver.

Io. 8. 13. “ When the *Pharisees* said unto
“ Christ , thy *Record* is *not true* , be-
“ cause thou *bearest record of thy self* .
“ I am one (*faith Christ*) that *bear re-*
“ *cord of my self* , and the *Father* that
“ *sent me* , *beareth witness of me* .

18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. Moreover he tells the *Disciples* that
the *Comforter* should *testify of him*. And
ye also shall bear witness , because ye
have been with me from the beginning.

So that beside the *Witness* of the
Apostles , the *Gospel* had the *Attestati-*
on of all the persons of the *Trinity*; *viz.*

Of the } 1. Father,
} 2. Son,
} 3. Holy Ghost.

1. God

1. God the Father bore witness to his Son; and that he did, by 1. *Visible Signes*, and 2. *Audible Voices*, 3. *by Mission of Angels*, 4. *by Cooperating in his Miracles*, &c.

1. At his *Nativity*, a new Star appeared. At his *Baptism* they saw the heaven opened, and the Spirit sent from the Father in the *visible shape of a Dove* and lighting upon him. *Before his Passion*, he was *transfigured* in their sight. And *At it the Sunne was eclipsed* when the *Moon was full*, the *Vail, the Rocks, rent*, So that the *Centurion* said, *Surely this man was the Son of God*, *Bodies of Saints* were seen of many, all these were *visible signes*.

2. *As for the בַּת קֹול* (the daughter of the Voice) In his *Baptism* Lo! ^{Mar. 3. 17.} _{17. 5.} *voice from heaven*, Saying, *This is my beloved Son* — *At his Transfiguration* a Voice came out of a cloud, which said, *This is my beloved Son* — hear him. *A little before his death*, as he was *Praying* “*Father, glorifie thy Name*,” ^{Io. 12. 28.} *There came a voice from heaven*, Saying, “*I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again*.

3. For

3. For mission of Angels by the Father, We find them still ready upon all occasions from before his Coming down, to the time of his Ascension into Heaven.

Luc. 1. 16. Before his Conception, the Angel **Gabriel** appeared to **Zachary** and to **Mary**, before his Nativity to **Joseph** saying fear not **Joseph**. At the time of his **Nativity** a whole Chorus appeared to the Sheapheards. In his Infancy an Angel **Mar. 1. 20.** appeared twice to **Joseph**, admonishning him of his going to **Egypt** and his return from thence.

Luc. 2. 9 **31.** **Mar. 2. 13** **1. 9. 20.**

4 11. In his Adult age they ministred to him in his hunger; Before his death, **Mar. 28. 2.** they strengthned him in his Agony; **Mar. 16. 6.** **Io. 20. 12.** After it, they rolled away the stone from his Sepulcher; They declared his resurrection; And in his Ascension, they stood by, and foretold his coming again to Judgement. Ye men of Galilee why stand ye gazing? This same **Ac. 1. 16.** **Jesus** —

4. The Father cooperated with him, according to that of our Saviour the father worketh hitherto and I work. — &c.

These

These are some of the *Attestations* of the Father.

2. *Christ bore witness of himself.* And this he did, by proving himself to be the *Messiah*; viz. by fulfilling all the *Prophecies* relating to the *Person* or *Offices*; the *Life*, and the *Death* of the *Messiah*.

His *Generation* was such as cannot be declared, he was born at *Bethlem*, of the tribe of *Juda*, of the *Family* of *David*, about 490. years after the *return* from *Captivity*. When the *Scepter* was just now departed from *Juda*.

He performed not only the *Substance* of the *Prophecies* but all the *Circumstances* foretold, Concerning the *Life* and *Death* of the *Messiah*.

He was to be a *Prophet*, and so he was. The *Spirit* of the *Lord* anointed him to *preach*, and he spake as never man spake. He foretold many things to come, they all bare him witness.

2. He was to be a *King* and so he was. His *Name* was *Wonderful*; his *Power* was shewn throughout the *universal System* of the *World*, the *Angels* good

good and evil, the Heavens, Elements, Plants, Fishes, Brutes, Health and Sickness, Life and Death, were all obedient unto his Word.

3. He was to be a Priest and so he was. He made an Atonement by his Obedience, and by his sufferings to the least punctilio (to the taking of a little Vinegar) and when all things were fulfilled, He cryed with a loud voice τελέλεσαι it is finished, and he bowed his head and gave up the Ghost.

Moreover, for the Justification of his Gospel (and that he might leave no place for Infidelity ;) he rose again from the dead, appeared to many Convinc'd them by all their senses ; They saw him, They heard him, they felt his hands and his side, They Eat and Drank with him ; They Conversed with him 40. dayes ; He was seen by more then 500. at once ; and (lastly,) in the sight of Many of them, he Ascended Visibly into Heaven.

These were some of the Testimonies, which our Lord Christ bore to himself.

3. The time would fail me, if I should speak

speak of all the Testimonies given by the *Holy Spirit*.

In his *Conception*, to *Mary*, fulfilling the Promise of *Gabriel*.

Before his *Nativity* to *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, in his *Infancy* to *Simeon* and *Hanna*, In his *Baptism* to *John*. I knew
“ him not, saith John, but he that sent me to baptize, said unto me, upon whom
“ thou shalt see the *Spirit* descending
“ and resting on him, that is he: and I saw the *Spirit* descending: Throughout his whole *Ministry*, till his Death, the *Spirit* gave witness to him.

Moreover, In his *Resurrection* he was declared the *Son of God*, with power by the *Holy Ghost*. After his *Ascention*, the *Holy Ghost* fulfilled all his undertakings, In that *Grand Manifestation at Pentecost*; at the time and place which *Christ* had undertaken for; A *manifestation* made to all the *Senses*, and to men of every nation under heaven, *Parthians* — besides a *Multitude* of other Instances.

Rom. 1.

Act. 2. 5.

Such were the *Attestations* given to *Christ* (the *Author* and *finisher* of our *faith*).

2. And for the Apostles (the Promulgators of it) Besides the Change of their spirits from darkness to light, Whereby they were led out of Ignorance and Infidelity, into all Truth. And from torpid and pusillanimous persons, during the life of their Master, they became, when he was dead, the most active and magnanimous in the world. (I say, besides this Change) They had bestowed upon them, All things necessary (either for their, 1. Own Assurance, Or for the 2. Conviction of the World. (Concerning the truth of the Gospel which they delivered.)

I. As for themselves, Besides the Conversation with their Master before and after his Resurrection; they had 1. Apparitions of Angels. And to one of them Christ himself appeared after he was ascended to his father.

2. They had the Bath Kol. (Voices from Heaven) In the 9 of the Acts, We finde a Voice from Heaven maintaining a Dialogue with Paul; and at another time, a voice saying to Peter, Arise Peter, Kill and Eat.

3. They had extatical Visions.
Peter

Peter was in a *trance* (Act. 10. 10, 19.) Act. 22. 17

Paul rapt up to the third heaven.

4. *They had monitory Dreames*, Paul saw a man in a *Dream*, saying unto him, Come into Macedonia and help us.

5. *They had Impulses of the Spirit*; So Paul was *forbid* by the *Spirit* to preach the *Word* in *Asia*: *Act. 16. 9.*

II. And for the *Conviction* of the *unbelieving World*

They had *diversities* of *gifts* and Cor. 12. *Different Administrations*. To one was given the *Word of Wisdom*, to another the *Word of Knowledg*, to another *Faith*, to another the *gift of Healing*, to another *Miracles, Prophesies, Discerning of Spirits, The gift of Tongues*.

As it is in the words which I quoted, "God bare them witness with *gifts* of the *Holy Ghost*, and with *signes* and *Wonders*; and that he did, so far, that I shall be justified by *Christ* himself, if I shall affirm, that the *Apostles* after his *death*, did *greater miracles* then he himself did in his *life*.

Of the *same kind* with our *Saviours*, some they performed, by means, having an appearance of greater *strange-*

ness, (Christ healed by his touch, his word his spittle, Peter by his shadow, Paul by handkerchiefs taken from his body.) But one great thing there was, wherein they exceeded; The Great and Manifest, and frequent Effusions of the Spirit, The Reception of it upon themselves, the communication of it to others, by Prayer, Preaching, Laying on of Hands; By these it was that the unbelieving world was convinced, and even Simon Magus himself, It is by the power and Virtue of those effusions that we are here met together at this time, that the World continues Christian at this day. And these are some of those standing means and Arguments, whereby the Propensity of our hearts to Infidelity may be overcome; and faith may be begotten, confirmed, recovered at this day: These are therefore to be revolved, Exhort one another dayly. To come therefore to a Conclusion.

My text it self is an Application, by way of Exhortation, Exhortations are enforced by Reasons of Duty and Concernment, and these I have hitherto endeavoured to lay before you.

If

If indeed there were no Sinfulness in Infidelity. Or, If in such times as ours, it were excusable. If there were no danger of falling into it, or no means left to remedy or prevent it; It would then indeed be to little purpose to Exhort men to beware.

But if the state of all these things is otherwise, if that be plain and evident; agreeable to Scripture, to Reason and to Experience; If the Speaker hath not beaten the Air, nor the hearers been careless and inattentive, I know not what can be required, to enforce and sharpen the exhortation.

If the time would suffer it, and I were speaking to a Common or Injudicious Auditory, I might think my self concerned, after all that hath been spoken to the understanding, to Apply my discourse to your affections, I should take unto me the various forms of Application used in this Epistle. I would Reprove, Rebuke, Exhort; I would cry aloud, and would not spare. I would lift up my voice like a Watchmans trumpet, warning you from the Lord, concerning that Spirit of irreligion and infidelity

which is said to have overspread the land.

I would take to my self a *Lamentation*, yea it should be for a *Lamentation*, for the *Professors* of *Infidelity*, and the *Infidelity* of *Professors*, every where. But I may not now be permitted to enlarge upon these things. I may onely pray to God to give you understanding in all things, and beseech you earnestly to consider what hath been spoken, *Concluding* in the words of the Text, *Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. Exhort one another dayly* —

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2

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OF

INFIDELITY.

Preached at

WHITE-HALL.

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Against the
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A

SERMON

Preached at

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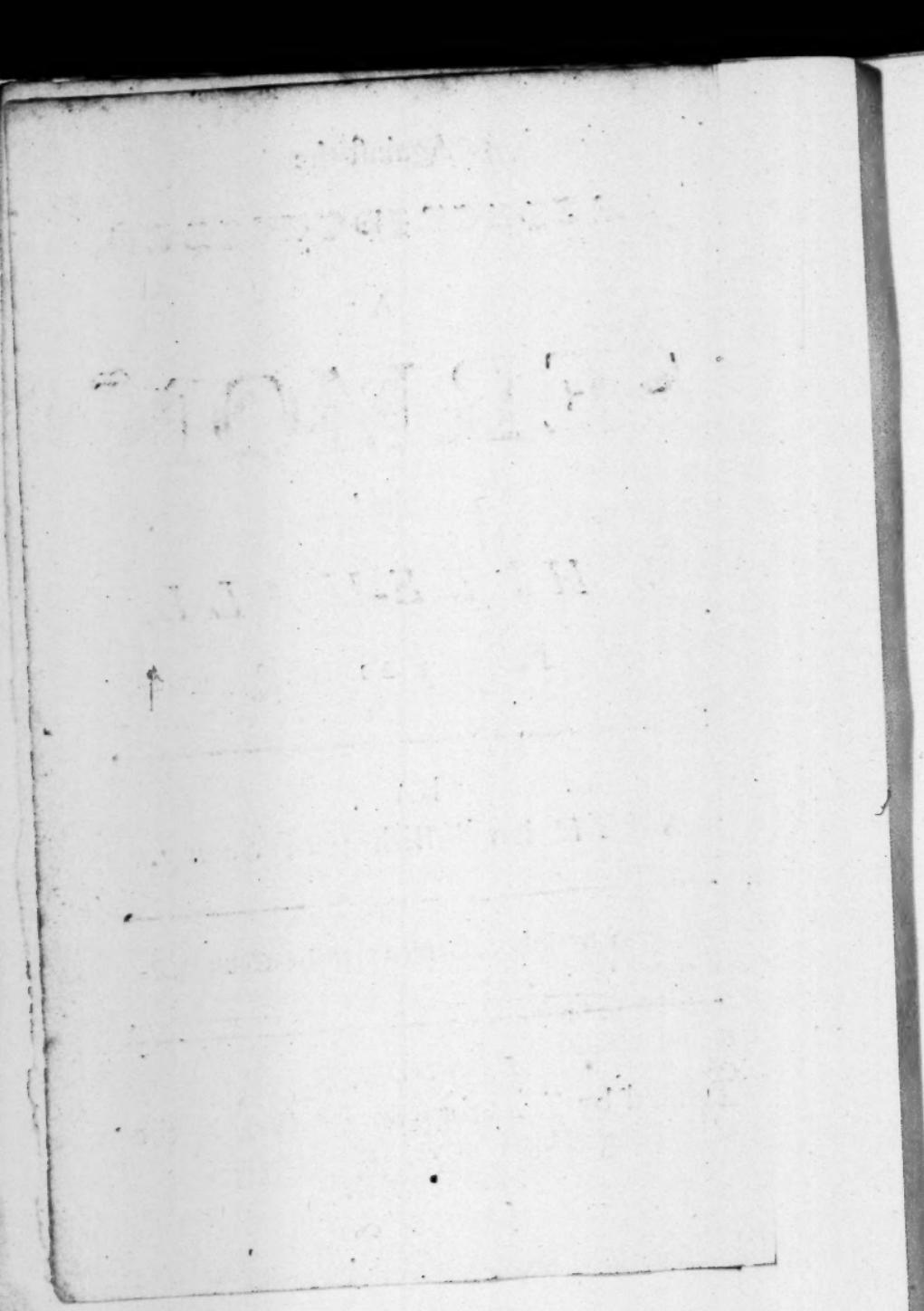
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2 Tim. 3. 16.

All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God.

IN the *verse* preceding, it is said concerning the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*, that they are *able* to make a man *wise* unto salvation, *διὰ πίστος τοῦ ἐν χριστῷ ινεῖ* (by the *faith* which is in *Jesus Christ*): And it follows immediately, *All Scripture, &c.*

H^a*rias* (the *Faith*) is often by a Metonymy taken for the *Gospel*, which is the *object* of the *Faith* of *Christians*. We read often of the ^a*Preaching*, and ^b*Hearing* of *Faith*; ^b*3. 25.* of the ^c*Analogie* of *Faith*, ^d*the common* ^c*Rom. 12. 6.* ^d*Faith* ^e*which was once delivered* ^d*Tit. 1. 4.* ^e*to the Saints* (in the *preaching* of ^f*Jud. 3.* *Christ*, and the *Writings* of his *Evangeliſts* and *Apoſtles*) and so I conceive it is to be taken in this place.

So that the *meaning* of the *whole* is this, The *Old Testament* understood and expounded according to the *Analogie* of the *New*, is able to make a man *wise*. And the *Pen-men* of the *Canonical Books* of the *Old Testament* (wherein *Timothy* had been instructed *in scriptis*) and of the *Books* of the *New Testament* (which except those of *S. John* were extant before the writing of this Epistle) were *inspired* and *directed* by the *spirit of God*.

The *words* of the *Text* are an *entire Proposition*, *asserting* the *Divine Authority* of the *Canon of Scripture*; and my *endeavour* shall be at this time to *prove* the *truth* of that *Proposition*. Wherein, that I may proceed with all *plainness* and *clearness*, I shall premise two words by way of *Petition*,

{Precaution.

1. *By way of Petition*, I suppose and take for granted;

1. The great principle of the power of God, and his providence in governing the world.

2. That our *Body of Canonical Books*

Books of the Old Testament, is the same with that which was in Use in the time of Christ and his Apostles, And our body of the New Testament the same which was *anciently received* in the Church. So that what shall be proved of those, is *applicable* to the Original Scripture used in our time.

3. That those Books of New Testament whose Authors were not *anciently questioned*, were *Written* by those Authors whose *Name* they bear. And that those few others which were *sometimes* questioned by *some* particular Churches, and afterward *Universally received*, contain in them no *one point of Faith or Manners* dissentient from the Contents of those Books which were *never questioned*.

2. By way of *Precaution* and *Admonition* I must intreat you to take *notice*, that I shall not now meddle with

Against the

the Controversies concerning *Apo-*
crypha, Translations, Keri and Chetib,
Hebrew points, various Lections, dubi-
ous Authors or parts of Scripture.

But my endeavour at this time shall be to *Assert the Divine Authority of the body and substance of the Original Books of the Canon of the old and New Testament: And this not in the way of common place, but in a particular Examination or Refutation of the most dangerous Opinions of the Anti-scripturists, which are these.*

I. Of those who pretend to believe the *truth of the New Testament, and yet they deny the Divine Authority of the Old.*

II. Of those who pretend to believe the *truth, but deny the divine Authority of the New Testament.*

III. Of such as pretend to believe *matters of fact to have been truly related in the New Testament, but do not believe the truth of the Doctrinal parts relating to Faith and Manners.*

IV. Such as *deny the truth of the Relation of matters of Fact in the*

New

New Testament, and in consequence reject the whole Body of Scripture. Of these as briefly and plainly as I can.

I. The first Opinion is of those, who pretending to believe the Truth of the New Testament, deny the Divine Authority of the Old Testament. The Severians, and the Manichees, Basili-des, and Carpocrates of old: The Catuaptists of later times, some Anabaptists, Antinomians, and other Fanatical Sectaries amongst our selves.

In opposition to these, I shall shew, that supposing the truth of the New Testament, the Divine Authority of the Old Testament is to be acknowledg-ed: Because the Divine Authority of the Old Testament is asserted by Christ and his Evangelists and Apostles in the New.

I. Next to the Redemption of the world, the great busines which Christ had to do upon Earth, was to convince men that he was the Messias, and so to assert his Legislative Authority. And the great Argument which he used

Against the

used for the conviction of the world
was this.

All the *Marks* and the entire *Character* of the Messiah, and of his *Actions* and *Passions*, were *prefigured* and *foretold* by the *Law* and the *Prophets*, and the *Psalms*, i. e. in the *Volume* of the *Old Testament*.

And *all things* foretold or prefigured concerning the Messiah, were accomplished by *himself*.

So that though the *great Works* of Christ, and the *purity* and excellency of his *Doctrine*, and of his *Life* were of themselves *sufficient* to *justify* the Introduction of his *Law* into the *World*, yet he was pleased to resolve (as it were) his own *Authority* into the *Divine Authority* of the *Old Testament*, and to make use of those other manifestations of himself, in a co-ordination with that principle.

And therefore we find him still *pressing* the *Jews* with this, that if they did *believe* the *Writings* of *Moses*, and their other *Scriptures*, they must of necessity *believe him* also.

Joh. 5. 46. Moses wrote of me (saith he) where-

wherefore, did ye believe *Moses*, ye would believe me. The *Scriptures* *testifie* of me, therefore search them diligently, *ἰπεύρατε τὰς γραφὰς*. For the *attaining* of *everlasting life* he refers the *Lawyer* to the *Law*, *What is written in the Law? how readest thou?* *For the avoiding* of the *place of torments*, he makes *Abraham* refer the *Relations of Dives to Moses* and the *Prophets*. Joh.5.39; Luk.10.26; Luk.16.39.

In all his *Disputations* with the *Pharisees* and *Sadduces*, the *Lawyers* and the *Scribes*, he makes his *appeal* to the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*. And lest any one should think that in all this he did only argue *ad homines* (that disputing with the *Jews* he only proceeded upon their own *Hypothesis*) we find him in the *course* of his *Ministration* *positively* Mar.14.49; Joh.10.35; Mat.3.3n; Mar.5.18; asserting, that the *Scriptures* *must* be *fulfilled*; that they *cannot* be *broken*; that he *came not to destroy* the *Law* and the *Prophets*, but to *fullfil* them; and that *Heaven* and *Earth* shall pass away, before one *jot* or *tittle* of these should *perish*, until all was

Against the

was fulfilled. Thus he asserted the Authority of the Old Testament before his death.

And after his *Resurrection* he made a real demonstration that the Old Testament was given by inspiration of God ; for *on the day* of his Resurrection, falling into company of two of his Disciples, going to *Em-*
Luk.24.27 *maus* : He began at *Moses* and all the *Prophets*, and expounded to them *in all the Scriptures* the things concerning himself.

And afterward when the Eleven were come together, as a *recapitulation of this his method*, and that he might instruct his Disciples in it, he said unto them, *These were the words*
44. *which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled*, which were written in the *Law of Moses*, and in the *Prophets*, and in the *Psalms* (*in the Volume of Old Testament*) concerning me. He opened their understandings, and said, *thus it is written, and thus it behoved* : And as a short Idea of *what they were to do*, he tells them, and

and ye are Witnesses of these things.

2. In pursuance of this method we find the Evangelists very curious, and very frequent in observing the accomplishment of the Prescriptions of the Old Testament, reciting sometimes the speeches of Christ, saying, that he did such, or such a thing, to the end that the Scriptures might be fulfilled: *I will not eat of the fruit of the Vine till all things be fulfilled.*

Sometimes in their own Persons observing the accomplishment of particulars, and noting either particular portions of Scriptures which were fulfilled, or the fulfilling of the *Scriptures cited at large*, without any particular Quotation. Thus the Evangelists writing of the ^aConception, ^bNativity, ^cName of Christ, ^dof his coming out of *Egypt*, ^edwelling at ^f*Nazareth*, ^gmigration to *Capernaum*, ^h*riding to Jerusalem*: Say that these ⁱthings were done that the *Scriptures* (or the *saying of the Prophet*) at ^jlarge might be fulfilled: So likewise for the circumstances of his Passion, the

^aMat.1.
^b22.
^cMat.2.15
^dMat.2.23
^e4. 14.
^f21. 4.

¶ Mat. 26. the ¹ flight of his Disciples, ² casting
 56. lots upon his Garments, ³ Vinegar gi-
 127. 35. ven him to drink, ⁴ piercing his side,
 Joh. 19. 24 ⁵ bones remaining unbroken, &c.
 Joh. 19. 29.
 37. Other times they note the particu-
 lar Prophet, Christ ⁶ healed Diseases,
 Mat. 8. 17 ⁷ Mat. 13. ⁸ spoke in Parables, and that the say-
 15. ing of *Isaiah* the Prophet might be
 Mat. 2. 17 fulfilled. ¶ When *Herod* slew the
 Children, then was fulfilled that
 which was spoken by *Jeremy* the
 Prophet, *Rachel weeping for her Chil-*
dren, &c. and once we find a quota-
 tion of the second Psalm, and the
 like: *This for the Evangelists.*

3. *Lastly*, the Divine Authority
 of the Old Testament is asserted by
 the *Apostles*: Whom we find every
 where in their Writings, *citing* the

¶ Gal. 3. 10 Testimonies of the ¹ Law and the
 ¶ Act. 7. 42. ² Prophets, and the ³ Psalms; appealing
 ¶ Act. 1. 22. ⁴ to them, ⁵ what saith the Scripture?
 & 13. 33. ⁶ the Scripture hath concluded *so* or
 ¶ Rom. 4. 2. ⁷ the ⁸ *so*: *Arguing* out of them, oft times
 ¶ Gal. 3. 22. ⁹ *directly*; thus not only the Apostles
 ¶ Act. 18. ¹⁰ but ¹¹ *Apollos* mightily convinced the
 ¶ Jam. 4. 5. ¹² Jews, sometimes *ab absurdo*, ¹³ do ye
 think the Scripture speaks in vain?

In

In a word, the Apostles followed the way and *method* which their *Master taught* them ; they asserted that the *Gospel* was ^a promised by the *Prophets*, ^{Rom. 1.12.} ^b witnessed by the *Law* and the ^{Rom. 3.21.} ^c *Prophets* : ^d by all the *Prophets*. ^{Act. 13.} ^e Affirming ^{18. & 10.} of themselves, that they believed ^{43.} ^f all things written in the *Law* and in ^{Act. 24.} the *Prophets* : and that they continued ^{14.} testifying and saying ^g no other ^{Act. 26.} things than the *Prophets* and *Moses* did ^{22.} say should come.

Finally, lest any place should be left for doubting concerning any part of the Old Testament, the *Apostles* have expressly asserted concerning the ^h *Law*, that it is holy, just, and good ; ⁱ *Rom. 7.* ^j that the *Prophets* are holy, and ^k the ^{12.} ^l *Scriptures* holy ; that they are the ^m *Tim. 3.15.* ⁿ *Oracles* of God, ^o *lively Oracles* ; that ^p *Rom. 3.2.* ^q God spake by the *Prophets* ; ^r that ^s *Act. 7.38.* ^t *holy men* of God spake as they were ^u *Act. 3.21.* ^v *2 Pet. 1.* moved by the *Holy Ghost*. *Lastly*, ^{21.} (in the Text) that the ^w *2 Tim. 3.* ^x *wherein Timothy* had been instituted ^y *15.* by his Mother, were given by *inspiration of God*.

This is the sense of the New Testament

ment concerning the *Old Testament* ; supposing therefore the *Truth* of the *New Testament* , the *Divine Authority* of the *Old Testament* is to be acknowledged , contrary to the first Opinion of the Anti-scripturists.

II. The Second *Anti-scriptural Opinion* is of those who pretend to believe the *Truth* , but they deny or doubt the *Divine Authority* of the *New Testament* , either of the whole body of the *New Testament* , or at least of that part which delivers the *Speeches and Writings of the Apostles* .

Of this sort there are said to be many , who by the power and influence of their *Education* are restrained from denying or disbelieving the *Truth* of the *New Testament* , and yet through the infelicity of corrupt conversation are fallen from that *Veneration* which is due to writings supposed to be of *Divine Authority* .

For the *History* of the *New Testament* they have the same respect which they have for *Tacitus* or *Salust* , or some such other *History* ; for the *Mystery*

stery of the Gospel, the same which they have for some parts of *Plato*, or remnants of *Pythagoras*. For the practical parts, the same which they have for some parts of *Cicero* or *Seneca*, or *Epictetus*. All which writings they believe to be true, but no man believes them to be *Divine*. And some there are who pretend a great veneration for the speeches of *Christ*, but have a meaner esteem for the words, and writings of the *Apostles*.

In opposition to these Opinions, I shall shew, that supposing the words of *Christ* and the *Apostles* to be True, it will follow, that they are to be esteemed to be of *Divine Authority*.

Because *Christ* and the *Apostles* did profess and declare, that what they delivered to the world, was of *Divine Authority*.

And because our Lord *Christ* did undertake not only for himself, but for the Inspiration of his *Apostles* also.

1. In the examination of the next Opinion, I shall be obliged to lay before you some of the evidences of *Divine Authority* in *Christ* and his

B " Apo-

Against the

Apostles, here it is sufficient to produce their *assertions* of it.

The time of our Lord Christs *ministration* (betwixt three and four years) was spent in *preaching* and *working*, and his *Authority* was often questioned.

* Mat. 21: 23. In *Luke* 20. 1. and in the * parallel places, *While he was in the Temple* teaching the People, and preaching the Gospel, the *Chief Priests* and the *Scribes* and the *Elders* came upon him, saying, tell us by what *Authority* thou dost these things (preachest to the people) and who gave thee that *Authority*?

Mar. 11. 27. Knowing the perverseness of their minds, he was not pleased to gratifie them at that time with a direct answer, but confounded them with a question concerning the Baptism of *John*.

But at Other times, upon Other occasions, we find the Divine Authority of his teaching abundantly declared and asserted by him.

Joh. 14. 6. * *I am the way, the truth and the life*: *The words which I speak unto you*

Joh. 6. 63

you they are *spirit*, and they are *life*. * *The words* which I *speak* I ^{Joh.14.} speak not of my *self*, but of the ^{10:} *Father* which dwelleth in me. ^{16:} ^d *My* ^d *Joh.7:16* *Doctrine* is not *mine*, but *his* that ^{Joh.8.28} *sent* me. * *I do nothing* of my *self*, ^e but as my *Father* hath taught me so ^f *I speak*. ^f *I have not spoken* of my ^{Joh.12.} *self*, but the *Father* that *sent* me, he ^{49:} gave me a *Commandment* what *I* should say, and what *I* should speak. ^{50:} * *Whatsoever* I speak therefore, even ^{Joh.12.} as the *Father* said unto me, so *I speak*. ^{50:} * *Heaven* and *Earth* shall *pass away*, ^{Mat. 24:} ^{35:} but *my words* shall *not pass away*.

Thus did our Saviour assert the Divine Authority of his Words.

2. *And so likewise the Apostles* are very frequent in asserting the Divine Authority of the things which they delivered.

In the 15. of the Acts, we find them *assembled* about the question of *Circumcision*; and they *accounted* it *no robbery* to entitle their *Decrees* to the *Holy Ghost*, *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us*, v. 18.

Nor do they pretend to revelation

when gathered in *Council only*, but each one severally for himself.

S. Peter professes of *himself*, that he
 ¶ Pet. 5. 1 was a *partaker* of the *glory* which was
 revealed: And of his *Gospel*, that it
 ¶ Pet. 1. 5. was *b* revealed from Heaven.

¶ Joh. 1. 3. *S. John* declares that he had *κοινωνίαν* with the *Father* and the *Son*; as for his other writings, that they contained the things ⁴ which he had heard and seen with his eyes, which he had looked on, and his hands had handled of the Word of life.

As for the Apocalypse, he professes,
 ¶ Apoc. 1. that being in the *Spirit* in the *Isle of
 9, 10: Patmos* he received it, and was commanded to *write* it in a Book.
 ¶ Ib. 19.

The greatest writer among the *Apostles* was *S. Paul*, and the *greatest Question* hath always been (amongst *Unbelievers*) concerning his *Calling* and the *Authority* of his *Gospel*.

He knew this very well, and therefore we find him asserting both his *Calling* and his *Gospel* with abundant care and diligence.

He affirms himself to have been
 an

an Apostle not ^a of man, neither by ^{Gal. 1. 1.} man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father; That by ^b God himself he ^{Rom. 1. 1.} was separated to preach, constituted ^{2 Tim. 1. 11.} a Preacher, an Apostle, and a Defender ^{Phil. 1. 17.} of the Gospel. As concerning his Gospel, he professes to have ^c received ^{Eph. 3. 1.} it by Revelation of God.

As for the spirit wherewith he wrote and preached, he professes himself ^d ready to give a proof of Christ ^e speaking in him. He appealed to the Prophetick Spirit then in the Church, ^f If any man think himself a Prophet or ^{1 Cor. 14. 3.} spiritual, let him acknowledge the things which I write to be the Commandments of God.

Out of this assurance it was that he enjoined his Epistles to be read in the Churches of ^f Coloss, ^g Laodicea, ^f Col. 4. 16. ^h Thessalonica, and ⁱ excommunicates ^h 2 Thes. such as should be disobedient in that particular.

And lest any one should here repeat the Objection made against our Saviour, Thou bearest witness of thyself, thy witness is not true.

S. Paul speaking of *all the Apostles*,
 Eph 4.11 affirms that *God had set them in the*
 3. 5. *Church*, and that ^bthe *Mystery of the*
Gospel was revealed to the holy Apo-
stles by the Spirit.

Particularly, notwithstanding that
 dispute betwixt S. Peter and S. Paul
^{* Porphy.}
^{Hier. Pro-}
^{am. Galat.}
^{¶ in c. 2.}
^{Celsus.}
^{¶ Gal. 2.}
 (from the ^{*}first Ages of the Church
 to our own Times, objected by Un-
 believers to the prejudice of Religi-
 on) it is remarkable, that, *in the same*
place where S. Paul gives an account
how c Peter was to be blamed, and
how and wherefore he withstood him to
his face at Antioch, he doth expressly
affirm, that the Gospel of the Circumci-
sion was committed to Peter, and that
God wrought effectually in Peter to
the Apostleship of the Circumcision.

On the other side S. Peter, *in that*
very place, where he may seem to
^{¶ Pet. 3.15}
complain of the ^dΔυσύντα of S. Paul,
yet even there he owns him as his be-
loved Brother, acknowledges his Wis-
dom to have been given him of God,
and numbers all his Epistles, inter-
τὰς λοιπὰς γραπὰς, amongst the other
Scriptures.

3. Lastly,

3. *Lastly*, for such as would put a difference of *degrees* betwixt the Authority of the *words* of *Christ*, and the *writings and sermons of the Apostles*, they may take notice, that the *Authority of these, resolves* it self into the *veracity of Christ himself*.

He it was who being to leave the World, promised his Disciples again and again, that he would ^a *send down* ^{Joh. 15.} upon them the *Holy Spirit*, that ^b *instruct* them and *teach* them ^{26.} ^b *all things*, that should ^c *Lead them into* ^{16. 13.} *all truth*, ^d *Bring to their remembrance* ^{14. 26.} *all things* which he himself had *spoken*, that should ^e *shew them* things to ^{16. 13.} *come*, that with this Spirit they should not be lightly dash'd, or sprinkled, but that they should be ^f *Baptized*, and ^f *Ag. 4. 5.* as it were *plunged* into it.

How all these *Promises* were performed, and how the *Assertions* of the Divine Authority of the *Words of Christ*, and the *Apostles* were *proved* to be true, I am *next to shew*. *In the interim I conclude*, that supposing the *truth of the words of Christ and his Apostles*, they are to be *esteemed of Divine Authority*.

III. The third Opinion is of such as pretend to believe *matters of fact* to have been *truly related* in the *New Testament*, but they do not believe the *truth of the Doctrinal parts* relating to *Faith or Manners*.

Of these there have always been *too great a number*, not only *pretenders*, who under a *form* of Christianity deny the *power* thereof, but *generally all sorts of Hereticks*. When *Porphyrius* had revolted from Christianity to *Platonism*, and had bent all his Forces against the *Scripture-History*, he was *refuted* not only by *Lactantius*, and *Methodius*, men Orthodox in Doctrine, but by *Eusebius* and *Apollinaris*; and of late days, *Socinus* and others have well asserted the *truth* of the *Scripture-History* who yet have been *offended* at the *dogmatical parts* of the *Gospel*, and concerning the *Faith* have made *shipwreck*.

In Opposition to *these* I shall endeavour to demonstrate, that, *supposing Mitters of Fact to be truly related* in the *New Testament*, it is *unreasonable*

ble to suspect the truth of any of the Doctrines delivered by Christ or his Apostles.

Amongst the various fancies concerning Religion, wherewith the whole world hath been always embroiled : Two things there are wherein all the Sons of Adam have agreed ; namely, 1. That that is to be believed which hath received the testimony of God. And 2. That this testimony is to be gathered from instances of supernatural Wisdom and Power.

In the study of natural and Philosophical Theologie, the speculativi amongst the Greeks and Romans, and other Nations, sought after Wisdom, (Reason, and Demonstration. But) to reduce the People to the forms of religious Rites and Sacrifices prescribed them, they were made to believe the Epiphanies of the Gods, and the manifestations of their Wisdom, and Power, by Oracles and Works supernatural.

To these even Mahomet pretended though his great Argument was from the

the Sword : and of the Jews I need not speak.

For a *Foundation of Religion*, and in our *inquisition* after that, short of this *Testimony* we ought not to stay ; further we cannot go : And herein is the utmost of humane *wisdom* to consider well those *Evidences* upon which we adventure the *interest* of our *eternity*.

To this evidence therefore we *appeal* in asserting the *Doctrine* of our Lord *Christ*, and his *Apostles* ; Namely to the instances of *Supernatural Knowledge* and *Supernatural Power*, whereby their *Doctrine* was *attested*.

I shall not here wave the force, but I shall decline the *repetition* of what I have formerly spoken concerning the attestations given to it by *Visible Signs*, *Audible Voices*, *Apparitions of Angels*, *Fulfilling the Prophecies*, *Evidences of Christs Resurrection*, *Mission of the Holy Ghost*.

In *Joh. 7. 15.* the Jews wondred at Christ that he *knew any thing* : How *knoweth*

knoweth this man *Letters*, seeing he never learned them? but if we *mark* the *scriptures*, we shall *find* that he *knew all things*, and that *nothing* was withdrawn from the reach of his understanding.

He knew the sickness and death of Lazarus, though *absent* and at a distance; *He saw Nathaniel under the Fig-tree*, and convinced him that he was the Son of God, and the King of *Israel*: *Come see a man* (said the *Woman of Samaria*) which told me *all things* that ever I did, *is not this the Christ?*

He was Kephisynis: The secret ^d *Joh.6.61* *murmurs* at his hard sayings, the *inward* ^e *desires* to ask him *Questions*; ^e *16.19* the ^f *Reasonings* and *Dialogisms* of the ^f *Luk.9.47* *hearts* of his Disciples; ^g the *secret* ^g *Mar.12.15, 25.* *Councils* of the Scribes and Pharisees, ^h *Mar.2.8.* ^b *their evil surmisings*, ⁱ *their treacherous intentions* to intrap him, ^k *their Luk.11.17.* *mental Blasphemy*, were all naked and manifest before him.

He knew what was in man, and ^l *Joh.2.24* needed not that any one should tell ^l *25.* him;

^a Mat. 17. him; ^b He knew the various *Kinds of*
^{21.} *Devils*, and how they were to be e-
^c jected: *This Kind* cometh not out
^{Mat. 17. 21.} ^d but by Prayer and Fasting. ^e He knew
^{Mat. 17. 27.} the *Fishes* of the Sea, and *where* they
 were, and *what* was *in* them.

^b Joh. 18. 4. *He knew* not only things *past* and
^c ^{11. 11.} *present*, but *to come*; ^b *He foresaw all*
^{13. 11.} *things* that were to come upon him,
^c *who it was* that should betray him,
^d Mat. 20. ^{18.} *he foretold* his Disciples *all the cir-*
^e ^{23.} ^{Mat. 10.} *stances of his Passion*, ^d *how he*
^f ^{23.} *was to be Betrayed*, ^e *Condemned*, ^f *de-*
^{Mat. 16.} ^{21.} *livered to the Gentiles*, ^g *mocked*,
^{21.} ^{28.} ^{Mat. 14.} *scourged*, *spit on*, *kill'd* and *Cru-*
^{28.} *cified at Jerusalem*.

^b Luk. 19. ^{44.} *Behold*, saith he, *I tell you before*;
^b ^{44.} ^h *Let this saying sink into your hearts.*
ⁱ Mat. 26. *He forewarned Peter of his denial*,
^j ^{34.} ^{31.} ^k *and the Disciples of their flight.*

^l Luk. 21. ^{20.} *He foretold things to come after*
^{his death}, the *time* and *manner* of the
^m *destruction of Jerusalem*: *The success*
^{of his Gospel}, the *Effect* (unlikely) of
ⁿ Joh. 12. *his Crucifixion*, ^m *that it should draw*
^o ^{32.} *all men after him*, ⁿ *that it should be*
^p ^{14.} *preached and believed in the whole*
^{world}

world spreading it self like *Leaven*, ^a Mat. 13.
and like a *grain of Mustard-seed*, ^b 31.
^b that *Satans Kingdom* should be ^c Luk. 10.
^b *destroyed* suddenly like *lightning*; notwithstanding the ^c *false Christs* and ^d Mat. 24.
false Prophets which should arise. ^e 25.

These and many more were instances of the supernatural *knowledge* of Christ: And for his *power*, the time would fail me to insist upon the many and various instances mentioned in the Gospels.

I shall omit the exercise of his dominion over the Sun, Moon, and Stars, Plants, and Animals, Earth, and Water, the Wind and the Sea, and briefly mind you of those which concerned the bodies of men; how he
1. *Fed their hunger*, 2. *Healed their distempers*, 3. *Raised their dead*, and ^f Mat. 14.
4. *Cast out Devils*. ^{19.} 15. 36.

He *fed* ^a 4000 at one time, and ^b Mat. 15.
^b 5000 at another, with 5 or 7 Loaves, ^c 30.
and a few little Fishes. ^d 9. 27.
^e 4. 23.

He *healed* the ^c *blind*, ^d *lame*, ^e *deaf*, ^f ^h Mat. 8.14
^f *dumb*, ^g *maimed*, ^h *feaverish*, ⁱ *hydro-* ⁱ Mat. 14.4
^f *ical*, ^k *paralitic*, ^l *leprons*, and ^m ^k Mat. 4.13
^f *lunatick* ^l ¹ Mat. 17. ^{12.}
^m Mat. 4.23

^a Luk.22. ^b tick persons. He cured not ^a green
^{51.} wounds only, but ancient inveterate
^b Mat.9.20 *Maladies* of ^b 12, of ^c 38 years conti-
^c Joh.5.5. nuance, one that was *born blind*.

He used no *Plasters* nor *Potions*, no
^a *Telestans* or other *Charms*, but per-
^a *Multos*. formed all these things by a ^d *touch*
^b Mat.9.20 of his *Hand* or of his ^e *Garment*. He
^c Mat. 8.6. healed ^f *absent* persons as well as *pre-*
^d Joh. 5.5. *sent*, ^g he *spoke* the *word* only and they
 were healed.

^a Mar.5.41 He *raised* to *life* the *Daughter* of
^b Luk.7.11 ^h *Jayrus*, the ⁱ *Widow*'s *Son* at *Naim*,
^b Joh.11. ^j his *Friend* ^k *Lazarus*, and ^l *many* bo-
^{39.} ^l *Mat.27.* *dies* of the *Saints*. Many of which
^{52.} *healed* and *raised* persons *lived* till
^a *Ins. Eccl.* about *Trajan*'s *time*, as *Quadratus* a
^b *H.l.4.c.3.* Disciple of the *Apostles* affirmed in
^c *3. 37.* *Annot.p.81* his *Apology* to *Hadrian* the *Empe-*
rour.

Like a *strong man* *armed* he cast
 out *Devils*, whatever *kind* they
 were of he quickly dislodged them;
^a *Mat. 17. 18.* that *foaming* and *tearing* Devil
 which withstood the power of his
Disciples, and *threw* down and *tore* the
possessed person, even as he was *yet*
coming

coming to Christ himself; he presently rebuked, and healed the child, and delivered him to his Father.

Neither their *long possession*, nor their *numbers* could secure them, he cast ^a seven at once out of *Mary Magdalene*, and an ^b whole *Legion* out of a ^{a Mar.16.9} ^{b Luk.8.29} certain man of the *Country of the Gadarens*, who had been possessed by them a *long time*.

Moreover, for *attestation* to the truth of his *Gospel*, he delegated all this power to others, to the ^c 12 *Apostles*, to ^{c Mar.16.7} ^{Luk.9.3.} the ^d 70 *Disciples*: ^{d Luk.10.} He bequeathed it ^e to *Believers* at his *death*, and they also ^{e 1.---9.} received and exercised this super- ^{f Mar.16.17.} ^{17.} *natural power*.

I have given a few instances of the *Supernatural Wisdom* and *Power* of Christ *solitarily* considered: The *History* of the *Gospel* affords us many Examples wherein they were gloriously *combined*.

By his *Knowledge* ^f he foretold his ^{f Mar.16.} ^{21.} *Resurrection*, he ^g performed it by his ^{g Mar.28.2.} *Power*. By his *Divine Understanding* ^h ^{h Joh.16.} ^{16, 28.} he ⁱ foretold his *Ascension*, and by ^{i 20.17.} the

[¶]Luk.24. the Power of his Divinity he
57. ascended.

He ascended, and by his Power he fulfilled the Predictions and Promises [¶]Act. 2.4. which he had made. He sent down the Holy Spirit, and shed forth the gifts of supernatural Wisdom and Power upon his Apostles.

Not to mention the Apparition of [¶]Acts 9: Angels, and of Christ himself, the [¶]Acts 10. Bath. Kol. the ^cExtasies, ^dDreams, ^{22.17.} ^dVisions, and ^eImpulses which were [¶]Acts 16.9 given them for their own assurance: [¶]16.6,7. That they might be enabled to preach the Gospel to all Nations, and deliver to the world those Scriptures whereof we are speaking, they had the word [¶]Cor.12.9 of Knowledge and of Wisdom and of Faith, and the gift of divers Tongues, and interpretation of Tongues bestowed upon them.

And to justify their Doctrine to the Ages present and to come, they had the Gifts of Prophesie, and of Healing, and of Miracles.

[¶]Ap. 4.1. ⁱJohn (the beloved Disciple) heard a voice as it were of a Trumpet, talking with him, which said, Come up hither,

hither, and I will shew thee *things* which shall be hereafter; and immediately he was in the *spirit*, and received the *Revelation*.

^a *Paul an Apostle* (though born out ^{Act. 27.} of due time) came to *Visions* and *Revelations*, he twice foretold what should happen to the *ship* wherein he was carried *Prisoner to Rome*.
 He foretold the ^b *Apostacy* of the ^{2 Thes. 2.} later times, the *rising* of *Antichrist*,
^c the *perillous times* which should ^{2 Tim. 3. 1} come upon the world in the last days. ^d *Agabus a Believer at large* foretold the *Famine* which was to ^{Act. 11. 8.} come upon all the world, ^e and the ^{21. 10.} ^f *Act. 5. 13.* binding of *Paul at Jerusalem, &c.*

But the *Instances* of *supernatural Power* exercised in *healing of Diseases*, *raising* the dead, ^g *confounding* the *Opposers* of their *Doctrine*, and in several other kinds by the *Apostles*, and their *Companions* and *Adherents*, the *Preachers* and *Writers* of the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel*, are so abundantly delivered in the *New Testament*, that I shall not offer at particulars.

Against the

In the 4. of the Acts we find all the Apostles praying ; μολυκασσον, that God would stretch forth his hand to heal, & that signs and wonders might be done by the Name of his holy Child Jesus. And immediately the place was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and with Power.

The particular Miracles of particular persons are recorded. In one word, they went and preached every where the Doctrines which are written in the Gospel ; the Lord working with them, and confirming their words by mighty signs and wonders, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.

This is the state of the matter of Fact, as it is propounded in the New Testament : I conclude therefore, that, supposing matters of Fact to be truly delivered in the New Testament, there is no reason to doubt of the Doctrines delivered by Christ or his Apostles, relating to faith or manners. And I come to the consideration of the last and extreme Opinion of the Anti-scripturists.

IV. The

IV. The last Opinion, is of those who deny the truth of the Relation of matters of Fact delivered in the New Testament, and in consequence reject the whole body of the Scriptures.

I could wish there were no such as these, and that what I have yet to say were altogether needless for that reason.

But what means then the publick
Rumors which we hear ? and whence is an Opinion gone into the world, that some great Philosophers and men of generous reason are dis- satisfied concerning the truth of scripture, and believe the Authority of it to be wholly derived from the Magistrate.

In reference to these I shall endeavour,

1. Briefly, to shew that the ground upon which these *Wisemen* and *Philosophers* reject the *Scriptures*, is contrary to the *Reason* of mankind.

2. To evince, that the *belief* of the *Divine Authority* of the *Scriptures* is most agreeable to *Reason*.

Against the

1. *As for the Argument and ground of those (amongst us Christians) that reject the body of the Scriptures, I do not remember to have heard of other than this.*

They have often called upon Believers, Pastors perhaps, or Doctors in the Church, for a clear and undeniable evidence of the truth of the story of the Gospel, and they have not afforded it: therefore they conclude, the Scriptures are to be rejected.

But is this the reasoning of generous Wits? and men of mighty deeds in Disputation, of men pretending to the depths of Reason and Philosophy?

To give a man a clear and undeniable evidence of any thing, there are but two ways, viz. To convince either his *senses* or his *Understanding*; the former whereof is to be done by *Experiment*, the later by *Demonstration*.

Would they have now an Experiment whether such or such a thing were done 16 or 1700 years ago? Would they have a demonstration of parti-

particulars, in their nature *indifferent* to be done or not to be done, depending upon the *liberty* of Causes?

Well were it for the world, if these *Beaux Esprits* would have the *patience*, and endure the *fatigue* of acquainting themselves with the *ways of knowledge* (*Experiment and Demonstration*) it would not then be troubled with the dangerous *Impertinency* of such Pretenders.

Then these men would not call for *Experiment* in a subject *uncapable* of it, and (being instructed that *Demonstration* is only of *Universal Propositions in materia necessaria*, whose *contrary Positions imply a contradiction*) they would *know*, that to demand *this kind of evidence* of the truth of the *Story* of the *Gospel*, is to be absurdly *injudicious*, and to *act* contrary to the *Reason* of mankind.

For seeing we may not with *civility* suppose this *principle* to be advanced only for the *destruction* of *Religion*, and the *ruine* (or at least undeniable hazard) of the

Against the

Souls of men ; *We ought to believe* that these *Philosophers* intend this as a *general Maxim* ; *"that (in matters* *"at least of moment) men ought not to* *"adventure to act, but upon clear and* *"undeniable evidence, and (speaking* *"properly) that wise men ought to be-* *lieve nothing at all.* Wherefore *let* *us suppose this* for a *general principle*, and consider what will follow.

Setting aside the knowledge of the *Affections* of a few *Lines and Numbers*, is not all *learning* to be *cast* away ? *Must not the Civil World* of mankind be brought to swift *confusion* ? *must not mankind* it self, in a few *days* come to an end ?

suppose a *subject* should not yield his *Obedience*, or a *Tenant* his *Rent*, till *Titles* be made out by *Experiment* or *Demonstration*. *suppose* the *Hus-*
band-man and the *Merchant*, the *Ar-*
tificer, the *Souldier*, the *Banker*, and
Arist. polit. l.7.c.8. the *Judge* should not *adventure*, but stay for the *assurance* of *Experiment* or *Demonstration*, would not the *whole world* be confounded ?

suppose

Suppose men should not *marry*, nor take *Physick*, nor *eat* or *drink* till they should have *clear* and *undeniable* *evidence*, that all these things are what they suppose, and shall *succeed* according to *expectation*, would not *mankind* quickly be *spent*, and brought to an end?

If the management of all humane *concernments*, *Political*, *Oeconomical*, *Personal*, proceed upon the grounds of *Belief* and *Hope*, and *rational* (but not *demonstrative*) *inference*. *If* neither these *Philosophers* (if they would consider) nor *any other Person*, either ever *did*, or *possibly could*, perform *any one action*, upon *such evidence*, as these men require concerning the *truth* of the *stories* of the *Scripture*; then to *reject them* for want of *such evidence*, is repugnant to the *Reason* of *mankind*.

I proceed therefore to my *second assertion*, that the *Belief* of the *Divine Authority* of the *Scriptures* is *most agreeable to reason*.

That the Divine Authority of all the
C 4 *Scriptures*

Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, are *undeniably concluded* from supposition of the *truth* of the *Relation* or *History* of matters of *fact* in the *New Testament*, I have already shewn. And that the *rejection* of all *History* is *against* the *Reason* of mankind is evident, because all mankind receive some *History* or other: wherefore I shall briefly shew,

1. That the *History* of the *New Testament* hath *all* those *advantages* whereof *any History* is *capable*.
2. That it hath *greater* advantages than any other *History*.
1. The Arguments inducing men to the belief of *any historical Relation*, are all of them

Either { *Ab intra, Internal*, from the 1. *Credibility* and *scibility* of the Object. 2. The *Knowledge* and *Integrity* of the Writers. 3. The *way* and *manner* of writing.

Ab extra, External, The 1. *Reception* of it in the world. 2. *Concurrent testimonies* of *strangers*. 3. The *Concessions* of *Adversaries*, and the like.

In

In all which particulars, no History in the world can justly pretend any advantage above that of the New Testament.

1. For the Credibility, Object, and Cognoscibility of it.

1. To say that instances of *super-natural Power* and *Wisdom* are *impossible*, is to deny the *power of God* and his *providence* in governing the world: And to say that such things are *incredible*, as are and *have been* actually *believed*, in *all times*, and by *all sorts of persons*, *Jews and Gentiles*, *Christians and Mahometans* (a few *Atheistical persons* only excepted) is an *absurdity*.

The *History* that we speak of, pretends to no *Intrigues* or *Cabalistic*, *Counsels*, or *Mysteries of state*, but *contains* it self within the *limits* of things *Visible* and *Audible*, *things* that were *done* or *spoken*; so that no *History* can have *advantage* over it, respecting *Objecti*.

2. As for *Knowledge* in the *delivers*, I shall shew it by a *brief Induction*.

The

Against the

The whole New Testament consists of the Books of the *Revelation*, *Epistles*, *Acts of the Apostles*, and the *Gospels*.

The *Authors* of the *Epistles* and the *Revelation*, in the *Narrative parts* of them, deliver the things *done* or *spoken to or by themselves*, and could not be *ignorant* of their own *experiences*.

The *Book* of the *Acts* contains some things *done by* or *to the rest* of the *Apostles*, but chiefly the *concernments* of *Paul*; and it was written by *Luke*, who was an *individual Companion* of *Paul*, and *intimately* conversant with the *rest* of the *Apostles*.

For the things *Related* in the *Gospel* of *S. Luke*, he saith they were *delivered* to him by *those* who from the beginning were *Eye-witnesses* of the *works*, and *Ministers* of the *Word*, and *his History agrees* with the *other Evangelists*.

The *Gospel* of *S. Mark* hath *nothing* which is not in *S. Matthew* or *S. John*, and was *dictated* by *S. Peter*, the *Head of the Apostles*.

S. Matthew was an *Apostle*, and *S. John*

John the Bosom Apostle of Christ.
 The Apostles were chosen by him for
 Witnesses of his Words and Actions,
 they were with him from the begin-
 ning of his Ministry, continued with
 him till his death, conversed with him
 till his Ascension; That which they had
 heard, which they had seen with their
 Eyes, which they had looked on, which
 their hands had handled of the word
 of life, that they delivered in writing
 to the World: And more than this no
 Writer or Relater of History can pre-
 tend to.

2. For Arguments of their *sin-^a Cor. 5. 8.
 rity*, they have left ^a *Precepts of Ve-
 racity, and ^b prohibitions of lying, un-^{6.4.8.}
 der pain of Hell torments, the Lake ^{Phil. 4.8.}
 that burneth with fire and brimstone:* ^b Jam 3.14
They have ^c protested that they did not ^{Eph. 4.25.}
follow cunningly devised Fables; that ^{Apoc. 21.}
they did things sincerely as in the sight ^{8. 27.}
of God: ^{22.15.}

*They have appealed to the searcher
 of hearts: The God and Father of our
 Lord Jesus Christ knoweth that I lie
 not. The things which I write unto
 you, behold, before God I ¹ *lie not, Gal. 1.*
 20. faith S. Paul.* ^c 2Pet. 1.16
 They

1 Thes. 2.3. They have left behind them various instances of their simplicity and godly sincerity in representing their failings to the world, and of candour and ingenuity in distinguishing the dictates of their own Reason from the inspirations of the Holy Spirit: I speak by permission, not by commandment of the Lord: This say I, not the Lord; Thus it is according to my judgment,
 &c. 1 Cor. 7.

But besides all this, let the matter be estimated according to common reason: If these men did devise a Fable and impose it upon the world, what end could they propound to themselves in so doing? was there any profit in being destitute of all things? or pleasure in being persecuted, afflicted, and tormented? or honour in being counted Fools and Madmen.

Before they began to publish the stories whereof we speak, their Master was gone, and all worldly hopes were gone away with him: If they were not bound in Conscience, and in spirit,

rit; what *obligation* had he laid upon them to *labour* and *suffer* for his honour as they did?

To omit the severity of his behaviour to them, *He called* them off from their *Vocations*, *Peter*, and *Andrew*, *James*, and *John* from their *Fishing*, *Matthew* from his *Customers* place, the ^{Mat. 9.9.} rest accordingly.

They *forsook* their *Nets*, their ^{Mat. 4.20.} * *ships*, their *Relations*, and all their ^{22.} *interests*, and followed him.

And this they did (*clearly* and *plainly*) believing that he was to be a *Great Temporal Prince*, and in hopes of *Preferment* under him. In this *Expectation* they continued to the last minute of his conversation with them upon Earth, and he permitted them so to do.

Their last words to him were delivered in this question, *Lord wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom unto Israel?* Of the *thing* it self they *never* doubted, they *only* desire to be *informed of the time*,

Now after so long expectation? Consider his Answer. His

His Answer was this, *It is not for you to know the times, &c. but ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses of me unto the utmost parts of the earth;* and immediately he vanished away.

Was this an answer to their Question? or a satisfaction to their expectation? Was this an Obligation laid upon them? If he had not sent down the *Holy Ghost*, this would have moved them indeed, but it would have been to rage and indignation; this would have obliged them indeed, but it would have been to detest and abhor the name and memory of him that had abused them. But for the honour of his name, not their own, they did and suffered all things, and gloried in it. *An irrefragable argument of their sincerity in the things which they delivered.*

3. Of the internal Arguments for the belief of History, there remains only the Consideration of the way and manner of writing.

Histories then carry their own credentials

dentials in them, when the *principal* parts of them are *delivered* with such *circumstances* of *times*, *places*, and *persons*, as may render them liable to *Examination*, and *Refutation*, if they contain any *falsehood* in them.

And in this particular, no *History* hath any *advantage* over that *History* whereof we are *speaking*, as will be *evident* to him that considers it thoroughout.

Concerning John the Baptist, it is recorded, that he was born some few Luk.1.5. months before *Christ*, that his *Mother* was *Elizabeth*, that his *Father* was *Zachariah*, a *Priest* of the *Course of Abia*, that they *lived* in the *Hill-Country*.

He began to preach in the 15. of *Tiberius*, *Pilat* being *Governour* of *Judea*, *Herod* *Tetrarch* of *Galilee*, Luk.3.1. his *Brother Philip* *Tetrarch* of *Iturea*, and of the *Region of Trachonitis*, and *Lysanias* *Tetrarch* of *Abilene*. *Punctual and particular.*

Soon after this he was Imprisoned and *Beheaded* by *Herod*, for *reprobating* him about *Herodias*, all which Mar. 14.3. Vide Joh. Seph. Ant. 18.c.9.10. were *matters of Fact*, *very easie*, if Luk.2.1. *false*,

false, to have been refuted.

Concerning Christ, his birth is stated to have been at a time the most remarkable that ever was, when the whole world was taxed by Augustus, in the days of Herod, when Cyrenius was Governour of Syria; the place easie to be enquired of, it was in a Manger, in an Inne, in a Town that was a little one among the thousands of Iuda, easie to be examined.

Mat.4. 6. *Manger, in an Inne, in a Town that was a little one among the thousands of Iuda, easie to be examined.*

Luk. 3.23. *When he was about 30 years old, he was Baptized of John, & within a few days after he called his Apostles; and in less than four years space he performed all his mighty Works, whereof I shall mention only some few particulars.*

Joh.2. 1. *At Cana in Galilee he turned Water into Wine, at a Wedding, where was*

11. *much company. He raised the Daughter*

Mat. 9.18. *of Jairus, the Ruler of the synagogue, there was but one in that place,*

Mat. 8.6. *she was his only Daughter, and about 12 years Old. He healed the Servant of*

Luk. 7.2. *that Centurion that had built a synagogue. Can any thing be more particular?*

Joh.11.18 *At Bethany, 15 Furlongs from Jerusalem,*

rusalem, a few days before his death, he raised *Lazarus* after he had been dead *four days*. Could any thing be more examinable?

His death was at Jerusalem, at the time of the *Passeover*, a time of greatest annual concourse in the world, and *then it is said*, that the *sun* was *darkened*, the *Veil* rent, the *Rocks* torn a pieces, the *Graves* opened. Can any thing be more *refutable* than these things, if they had been false?

So likewise for the Apostles. The *healing of Eneas at Lydda*, *raising of Dorcas at Joppe*, the *passages with Cornelius Captain of the Band* called the *Italian Band* at *Cæsarea*, and many other *acts* of *Peter*. The *increditation of Barjesus at Paphos*, in the *presence of Sergius Paulus the Governour*. The *healing of a Cripple at Lystra*, in the *presence of the Priest of Jupiter*, besides many other *acts* of *Paul*, and the *rest of the Apostles*, are *so circumstantiated in the History*, that if *false* they might have been very easily *contradicted*.

D

But

Act 9. 33.
40.
10. 1.13. 6.
14. 13.

Against the

But besides all these, this History contains a *Narration* of things *done* and *said*, not only by persons well affected, but by *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*, and the *Roman Governours*, by the *Pharisees*, the *Scribes*, the *High Priests*, and the *Sanhedrim*; all of them *Enemies* both to the *Historians* and the *History*; and if any of these things had been *convicted* of *falshood*, would not the *credit* of the whole *Gospel* have (at once) been *utterly overthrown*?

I conclude therefore, that in respect of *internal Arguments* for *belief*, no *History* hath, or indeed can have any *advantage* above the *History* of the *New Testament*.

2. As for *External Arguments*, I can but name them. Though the whole world *interested* themselves *against* the *story* (so *examinable* as you have heard) though the *Books* were *extinct*, while the *memory* of things was *recent*, *Matthew* within *seven* years, *Mark* within *eleven*, *Luke* about *twenty four*, *post mortem Christi*; the *Epistles* of *Peter*

Peter and Paul within *thirty* years, all the rest, *intra unius hominis aetatem*, yet no man could ever *convince* them of *falshood*.

The *stories* were received by men of the greatest *Wisdom*, *Learning*, and *Virtue* amongst the *Greeks* and *Latines*. Many of the *hardest* *passages* were *attested* and *confessed* by *Enemies* and *Unbelievers*.

The *Authors* owned by *Julian*: the ^{c.} *Cyrill*: ^{10. c. Jul.} *Miracles* ^{Orig. c. C.} confessed by *Celsus*: the ^{c.} *Euseb.* ^{check}ing of the *operation* of the *Devil*: ^{TerioHi-} *by Porphyrius*: ^{storiarum,} the *Darkness* and ^{Citat. à Ju-} *Earthquake* at the *death* of *Christ* by ^{10. Afr. 3.} *Thallus* and *Phlegon Trallianus*: ^{Chronogae} ^{Orig. c. c. 13.} the *Crucifixion* of *Christ* (by *Pilat* under ^{15. 44.} *Tiberius*) by *Tacitus*: And in one ^{Vide Theo-} word, The entire *Volume* of the *Scri-* ^{Annalium.} *ptures*, the very same which our *Church* receives (by *virtue* of the *belief* of the *History* of the *Gospel*) ^f before any *ge-* ^f *Athanas.* *neral Council*, or the *time* of *Constan-* ^{Synops.} ^{8. Const. ad} *tine*, without any *Convocation* of the ^{p. p. Nicaea,} *Clergy*, or *imperial Edict* for that ^{Vide Theo-} *pose*, *was* *instinctu quodam Chri-* ^{doret. l. 1.} ^{c. 6. Gr-} *stiano*, generally received by all *Chri-* ^{Lat. Pan.} *tians*,

Against the
stians, and the world made Chri-
stians.

In respect of all these Arguments, internal and external, I might have justly said, that the *History* of the *Gospel* hath the advantage of any other *History*; but seeing there are some particulars wherein the advantages are super-eminent, I shall speak a little of that distinctly by it self, and so conclude.

2. These advantages I shall reduce to two heads, *Testimonium Rei.*

{ *Dei.*

1. For the *Testimonium Rei*, consider,

- 1. *Opposition to* } the *Gospel.*
- 2. *Prevailing of* }

1. Never any story was so much opposed as the *Books* and *History* of the *New Testament*, by *Jews* and *Gentiles*, by the *World* and by the *Devil*.

The *beginnings* and *propagation* of the *Gospel* was by the *Jews* *maliciously* and *frenuously* opposed in the *times* of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, and in all *succeeding Generations.*

Left.

Lest all men should believe in Christ Joh.11.48
 (because of his *Miracles*) the *Rulers*
 took counsel to *destroy* him, the *Peo-*
ple cryed out to have him *Cruci-*
fied.

Lest the last error (as they *called* Mat.27.64
 it) should be *worse* than the *first*, they
 sealed up his *Sepulchre*, and set a *watch*
 upon it; and lastly, suborned the *soul-*
diers to say, that his *Disciples* came by
night while they were *sleeping* (how
 could they *know* this?) and *stole* him
 away.

That the first Miracle wrought by Act. 4. 6.
Peter and John might not *spread* a-
 mong the *People*, the *Rulers* and *Elders*
 and *Scribes*, *Annas* and *Caiaphas*, and
John and *Alexander*, and all the *Kin-*
dred of the *High Priest*, laid *hands* up-
 on them, and *put* them in *hold*, and
threatned and *commanded* them not
 to *speak* at all in the *Name* of *Je-*
sus.

When Stephen had uttered his testi- Act.7.57.
mony, the *people* cried with a *loud*
voice, and *stopped* their *Ears*, and
ran upon him with *one accord*, and

cast him out of the City, and stoned him.

Alt. 9.2. Wherever they met with *Believers, Men or Women, they haled them into Prison, breathing out threatenings and slaughter.* Wherever they met with the *Preachers, they opposed and Alt. 13.45 blasphemed, they tumultuated, they 14.2. 13.50 stirred the *Gentiles, they enraged the chief men of the Cities and the honourable women against them.**

The instances of their *malicious opposition, in all ages of the Church, are so many as are not to be numbered in a few Minutes, but would require many days only to name them.*

*They first stirred up Nero to persecute the Christians, they contrived the death of Polycarpus, they stood by, and insulted over the dying Martyrs; in a word, whoever shall read the histories of primitive times, he will find that the Jews were generally the *Setters and Informers against the Martyrs, and the Brokers for their Goods after Execution: And the Histories of our**

our own and other *Nations* will shew us the *height* of their *malice*, and the *continuance* of it.

Now, beside the little Nation of the Jews, the rest of the whole world, when this *History* began to be published, and the Books written, were Heathen, universally devoted to the Devil, whom therefore our Saviour stiles, the Prince of this world.

And now that seed which had depended betwixt the seed of the Serpent and the seed of the woman 4000 years, was by the preaching and writing of these things brought to a Crisis.

The professed and declared design of the Gospel, was to drive the Devil out of his Dominion; Notwithstanding the antiquity of his possession, the universality of his Church, and the consent of all Nations, whereby he held his title. Notwithstanding his Empire was supported by Governours and Laws, and fortified by the Arms and actual strength of all the world, he saw, that if the Gospel were not sup-

press'd, a little time would spoil the pride of all his glory, that in a moment he should fall like lightning from Heaven.

Deut. 7.

That he should be exorcised out of the bodies which he possessed: That his famous Oracles should soon be put to silence: his gorgeous Temples and Images should be torn down, his Mysteries and lying wonders set at nought: That Prayers and Vows would be made to him no more, and he should cease to be celebrated in the songs of his Poets, and Hymns of his Hierophantæ.

That his revelling Festivals would be turned to mourning, no more gifts would be presented, no beasts, nor children, women or men sacrificed upon his Altars.

The Contention was de rerum summa (pro aris & focis) and his rage was kindled accordingly: He summons together all his wiles and stratagems, he musters all his forces, he sounds an Allarm to the world, stirs up young and old, rich and poor, all ages,

ages, sexes, conditions, the people wise and unwise, the *Common Souldiers* Orig. c. c. and *Commanders, Counsellors and i. i.*

Judges, Senate and Emperours, by suppressing these Books, and destroying the Believers of them, to *erase* the memory of the *Gospel*, and *abolish* it for ever.

The people were *enraged* against the Believers, as against the *common Enemy of mankind*, and *pro solenni suo*, they *slandered* them with unthought of wickedness, they *imputed* to them all the *calamities of the world*: And required them to *death*: *Si Tiberis ascendit in mœnia---Christianos ad Leones---*

Against these Books, the Learned employed their *Learning*, and the Witty employed their *Wit*. *Celsus, Porphyrius, Jamblichus, Hierocles, and other Philosophers*, endeavoured to dispute them out of the *world*. *Symmachus and Libanius, and other Rhetors* to *declaim* them away. *Julian and Lucian and other Scoptick wits*, endeavoured to *jeer* and *droll* away the *credit* of them. Mean

Meanwhile the *Senators* and *Lawyers* employ themselves to *destroy* the *Books*, by stretching against them the *ancient Laws* against bringing in Foreign *Religions*, and against *Magical* and *Fatidical Books*: And to *destroy Books* and *Believers* by *New Laws* made for that *purpose*, against *Combinations* (*Heteriae*) *Sacrilege*, *Treason*, the *Law* that none should *buy* or *sell*, or *draw water* without *Thurification* to the *Gods*, and the like.

• *Plin. Ep.*
10.97.

By force of these they persecute the *Believers*, as *Enemies* to the *Commonwealth*, and *Traytors* to the *Emperour*, as *sacrilegious* persons, and *contemners* of *Religion*.

The *people* sometimes *rising* upon them without any *Edict*, sometimes by *virtue* of *Edict's Imperial* or *Proconsular*.

From the beginning of the *Gospel* to the end of *Dioclesian* and *Maximian*, this was the *state* of *Believers*.

Their *Scriptures* were *forbidden* to be *read*, and *required* to be *burned*; their

their *Oratories* and (*obscure*) *Churches* were pulled in pieces ; their *Estates* were plundered and *confiscate* ; their bodies were *imprisoned* and *tormented* ; *Fire* and *Sword*, hot *Iron Chairs* and *Coffins*, *Gridirons*, and *Cauldrons*, *Hooks*, *Stakes*, and *Gibbets*, the *Teeth* of *Lions*, and *Tygers*, &c. were their portion.

It cannot be shewed, that ever any Book or Story met with equal Opposition.

2. Consider then how it prevailed, how quickly and largely, how deeply and effectually, although the *Precepts* were not contrived to sollicit the *Affections*, nor the *Doctrines* to court the *Reason* of men.

At one Sermon of Peter 3000, at ^{Act. 2. 41.} *another 5000 were converted : Within a few years after the death of Christ we find by S. Peter, that the Gospel* ^{1 Pet. 1. 1.} *was preached throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia ; and Paul had planted it from Jerusalem round about to Ilyricum : Besides what* ^{Act. 15.} *was done by other Apostles, in the Provinces assigned them at the Council of Jerusalem.* Within

Lib. 10.
Epist. 97.

Within 66 years this grane of Mustard seed was become a Tree, *Pliny* Proconsul of *Bithynia* (to whom the care of Religion, *ex officio*, did appertein) appointed by *Trajan* to suppress the *Christians*, he writes to him, that this Belief was *Longè latèq; diffusa Civitates, Vicos, Agros, impletos Christi cultoribus.*

During the second Century, it had shot out great branches, the boughs of this Tree were stretched out, *Hesterni sumus & vestra omnia implevimus.* *Tertullian* reckons up the known parts *of the World, in quibus omnibus Christi nomen regnat,* and concludes, *ubiq; porrigitur, creditur, colitur, regnat; adoratur.*

And lastly, During the third (à morte Christi) the *Fowls of the air, and Beatis of the field* lodged under the shadow of it: The *Net* drew good and bad to shore; the *Roman Emperour and Empire* declared themselves *Christians, i.e. Believers and Assertors of these Books:* So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

It went on conquering and to conquer, not by the spirit of the sword, but by the sword of the Spirit; the powers of the Earth, and the gates of Hell could not withstand it; it drove the Devil away with all his Temples, Idols, Oracles, Priests, Sacrifices, Services, like lightning: So fell the Dragon, the old Serpent that deceived the World, he was cast out with all his train.

So fell Lucifer the Son of the morn, his Friends and his Followers lamenting.

How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer the Son of the morning! Desolata Templa rarissimus Videlmarum emptor! Some complain of people forsaking of the Gods, others of the Gods forsaking their Oracles and Temples, and becoming useless to the World: Pliny. Porphy. He said I will ascend into Heaven, and exalt my Throne above the stars, but he was soon brought down to Hell.

For the Gospel like Leaven or Fire from Heaven, seized upon all that stood before it; it leaven'd Cities, Islands, Castles,

Against the

Castles, Councils, Camps, the Tribes
and Decuries, the Palaces, Senate,
Pleading-places.

*It took possession of the Learned,
and the Wise, the greatest and noblest
Wits of the Eastern and Western Nati-
ons: It raised up Philosophers to con-
found the Philosophy, and noble Or-
ators to confound the Rhetorick where-
with it was opposed.*

Against *Celsus* it excited *Origen*,
against *Porphyrie*, *Apollinarius*, & *Me-
thodius*; against *Porphyrie* and *Hiero-
cles*, *Lactantius* and *Eusebius* (besides
what was written *sparsim* by *Jerom*,
Augustine, *Cyril*, &c.) It set up *Chry-
sostom* against *Libanius*, *Prudentius*
against *Symmachus* and the *Rhe-
tiorians*.

*And as it spread it self large and
high, so where it took possession, it
took a deep possession, *Quantum ver-
tice---tantum radice*: Those that re-
ceived it truly, received it in the *love*
thereof, it took possession of their
hearts: it penetrated their *spirits*, and
took its *lodging* in the inmost recesses
of*

of the soul. The *Contents of these Books* was their most precious Pearl, and they *hid it in their heart*. The *Books themselves* were their greatest worldly treasure, and rather than they would *deliver them to be burned*, they chose to suffer the *loss of honour, liberty, estate, Wives, and Children*, nay even *life it self*. When *Dioclesian* required the *Scriptures* that they might be *burned*, In one *Province (Egypt)* in one *Month*, 17000 persons chose rather to *dye* than to *deliver them*: In Ensl. 8. c. 3 *comparison* of these they *counted not* their *lives* dear to them; the *love* of them was *stronger than Death*, many *waters* could not *quench* it, neither could the *flouds drown* it. *This was Testimonium Rei, and an advantage above all other Histories, or Writings in the World.*

2. Moreover they had *Testimonium Dei*. Indeed all that is already *spoken* is an *evidence of a Divine assistance*: But more *particularly*, God gave *Testimony to these Books*, by

I. Their

Against the

1. Their operation upon Believers of them.

2. His co-operation with Believers of them.

1. The *Gospel* which they *contain*, was the *power of God* to every *true Believer*. That which *no Institution in Philosophy*, nor *Initiation in the Mysteries* of any of the *Gods*, was ever Vide Orig. Cels. l.3. able to accomplish, that was *every where* *achieved* by the *belief* of the *Gospel*, in a *moment*. Like a *charm* from *Heaven*, it *stilled* the *passions*, and *mortified* the *lusts* of men. What a *Beadroll* doth *Paul* *reckon* up in the 1 Cor. 6.9. *Corinthians*: *But ye are washed* (saith *he*) *but ye are sanctified*, *but ye are justified*, *in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, *and by the spirit of our God*.

Notwithstanding all the *calumnies* Lall. de fals. sap. l.3.c.26. thrown upon *Believers*, and the *pre-judice* wherewith they were loaded, the *unpropitious* and *relucting world* were *forcibly convinced* that the *Believers* of these *Books* were *effectually* taught to *deny ungodliness* and *worldly lusts*, and to *live soberly, righteously*, and

and godly in this present world: through the cloud of ignominy where-with they were encompassed, their innocence broke forth as the light, and their just dealing as the noon day; the piety, loyalty, justice, charity, magnanimity, patience, meekness, and purity of Believers of these Books, convinced the unbelieving world, that God was in them of a truth: for they teach as having Authority and Power, and not as the writings of other scribes.

2. But beside the operation of these Books upon the Believers, God was pleased to give testimony to them by his co-operation with them in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds.

The History of the Gospel tells us, that when Christ was even now leaving the world, he left this Legacy to Believers for confirmation of the truth of the Gospel; These signs (said he) shall follow them that believe; *In my name they shall cast out Devils;* Mat. 16.17 *Speak with new tongues;* *Take up serpents;* *If they drink any deadly thing,*

it shall not hurt them; They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Now that this was *made good*, and that these *signs* (so long as there was *need*) were *continued among Believers*, we have as *good assurance* as we can have of *any thing beyond our own memory or experience*.

They have been delivered to us by a Cloud of Witnesses; by men of the greatest Wisdom and Learning in their Generations, by persons of such integrity, that they laid down their lives in testimony of their veracity; delivered not by hear-say, but upon their certain knowledge; delivered in their Disputations with, and Apologies to the Adversaries of Christianity, with a challenge to the examination of the truth, or a conviction of the falsehood of them. Instances are very numerous, I shall produce only a very few.

Justin the Martyr (who suffered *Anno 165*) affirms to *Trypho the Jew*, that *these supernatural gifts were found in his time among Christians.*

*Dial. cum
Tryphon.*

Irenæus

Irenæus an Auditor of *Polycarp*, who was a Disciple of S. *John* (suffered circa 206) affirms upon his own knowledge, that the gift of Prophesie was then frequent in the Church, that *many* had the gift of tongues, *ipsi audi- vimus*; Others cast out Devils, Others healed Diseases, Others raised the dead; and those raised persons continued many years amongst them, *pro certo.*

Tertullian in his *Apologetica adversus Gentes*, affirms that *Jam de vobis Demonas ejiciunt.*

Origen against *Celsus*, saith, that he himself had seen by invocation of God, and the Name of Jesus very many that were delivered from grievous maladies, *ἀπ' ἵδαστον* (*alienatione mentis*) *μαρτυρεῖ ἀλλων μυγίαν.*

Not to mention others, S. *Augustine* in his *Book de Civitate Dei* (begun about 410, but many years in writing) *l. 22.c. 8.* gives an account of very many *Miracles* done at *Hippo*, *Carthage*, and other places, of no great distance, noting *times*, *places*, *persons*,

occasions, appealing to the Country, delivering them under terms of the greatest assurance; *Scio ego; cognosco ego; nos interfuius, & oculis nostris aspeximus*: And in his Retractations, *Ea quæ cognoscimus neq; reserre neq; enumerare possumus.*

Other Histories and Writings, and the Authors and Believers of them can pretend no higher than to the testimony of men, these have the testimony of God also: If we believe the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. I conclude therefore, that there is greater Reason to believe the History of the New Testament than any other History in the world.

The sum of all is this, The Divine Authority of the Scriptures is the great fundamental and comprehensive Principle of Christianity, which being admitted it stands, and being removed it presently falls to the ground.

Against this therefore the great Enemy of Religion in these later days (under pretence of Reason and Philosophy) directs his Forces, and is said to

to have found a success very pernicious and deplorable.

I humbly conceive that the *Resolution of the belief of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures into the Decrees of Popes, or Determinations of Councils* with those who call themselves *Roman-Catholicks*, into *private impulses and dictates of the spirit* with the *Enthusiasts*, and into the *Laws and Edicts of Princes and Magistrates* with our new pretenders to *Reason and Philosophy*, is that engine whereby the Devil hath prevailed to *scandalize the world and cast it into Antiscriptural infidelity*.

It is for this *cause* that I have conceived it *requisite* (after many others who have *done worthily*) to have *recourse* (once more) to the *Original Reason of things*, and the common *loj. Effay*. Vide Phil. grounds whereupon *mankind* doth proceed in matters of this *nature*.

Where (hoping that I have *escaped* the *absurdity of begging the matter in Question, discoursing in a circle, and the inconveniences of some other methods*)

thods) I have endeavoured to demonstrate: That supposing the truth of the New Testament, both 1. The Old Testament, and 2. The New Testament are to be received as of Divine Authority.

3. And supposing *matters of fact* to be truly related, the *Doctrinal* parts are to be believed.

4. For the *Historical Relation* of *matters of fact*, that there is no ground to *dis-believe* it.

That for the *Reception* of it, it hath
1. All the *advantages* whereof an *History* is capable.

2. Far greater *advantages* than any other *History*.

Wherefore I conclude, that *All the Scriptures* (i. e. the *Canonical Books of the Old Testament* and the *Books of the New Testament*) were given by *inspiration of God*. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

